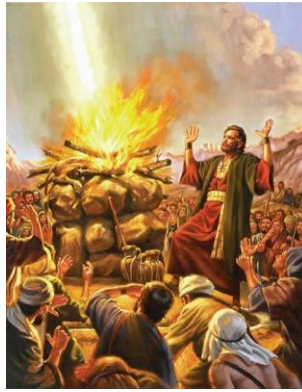




1 Kings 18:20-40

“THE CONTEST (SHOWDOWN) AT CARMEL”

²⁰ So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. ²¹ And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “**How long will you falter between two opinions?** If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” **But the people answered him not a word.** ²² Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal’s prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. ²³ Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*. ²⁴ Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” **So all the people answered and said, “It is well spoken.”** ²⁵ Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare *it* first, for you *are* many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire *under it*.” ²⁶ So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, “O Baal, hear us!” **But there was no voice; no one answered.** Then they leaped about the altar which they had made. ²⁷ And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.” ²⁸ So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. ²⁹ And when midday was past, they prophesied until the offering of the *evening* sacrifice. **But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.** ³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down. ³¹ And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.” ³² Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. ³³ And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid *it* on the wood, and said, “Fill four waterpots with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.” ³⁴ Then he said, “Do *it* a second time,” and they did *it* a second time; and he said, “Do *it* a third time,” and they did *it* a third time. ³⁵ So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water. ³⁶ And it came to pass, at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel and I *am* Your servant, and *that* I have done all these things at Your word. ³⁷ Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the LORD God, and *that* You have turned their hearts back *to You* again.” ³⁸ Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that *was* in the trench. ³⁹ Now when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; **and they said, “The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!”** ⁴⁰ And Elijah said to them, “Seize

the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!" So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there.

October 1, 1975

Muhammad Ali vs. Joe Frazier III, billed as the *Thrilla in Manila*, was the third and final boxing match between undisputed champion Muhammad Ali, and former champion Joe Frazier, for the undisputed heavyweight championship of the world.

The contest's name is derived from Ali's rhyming boast that the fight would be "a killa and a thrilla and a chilla, when I get that gorilla in Manila."

The Greatest/ Smokin Joe called by Don Dunphy

The bout is almost universally regarded as one of the best and most brutal fights in boxing history.

Constable points out that "the Phoenicians regarded Carmel as a sacred dwelling place of Baal. Storms with lightning and thunder were common on Mount Carmel, and Baal worshippers viewed them as manifestations of their deity. The name "Carmel" means "the garden land," and it was famous for its fertility. In the minds of many, Baal had the advantage in this contest.

- **THE CHALLENGING QUESTION-** ²¹ And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." **But the people answered him not a word.**

✓ We must make a decision.

Joshua 24 Exodus 32

James 1:8; Titus 1:16

"How long will you hesitate (**pasach**) between two opinions? - Heb "How long are you going to limp around on two crutches?" NET = "How long are you going to be paralyzed by indecision?" ESV = "How long will you go limping between two different opinions?" NJB = "Do you mean to hobble first on one leg then on the other?" Septuagint = How long wilt ye halt on both feet?" What is Elijah implying? He is clearly implying that the people are engaging in syncretistic worship of false gods and the true and living God.

to hop, i.e. (figuratively) skip over (or spare); by implication, to hesitate; also (literally) to limp—halt, become lame, leap, pass over.

THOUGHT - Those who limp between two opinions never fall on their knees in humble adoration of Yahweh. Uncertainty will never lead you to deep intimacy. Divided affections will never lead you into devoted worship to God. Who is God? If Yahweh is God, then worship Him. ([Tony Merida](#))

Amy Carmichael, "Everyday we live, we have to choose whether we should follow in the way of Ahab or of Elijah."

Whether Carmel or Calvary, we have set forth here that spectatoritis is the sin of both country and church today. We are a nation of onlookers, a grandstand generation in the stadium, at the show, at home watching television. The church has become a professional pulpitism financed by lay spectators. Everything is geared to showmanship and entertainment that involves no commitment. It is easier to dramatize than to duplicate so what was once an experience has become a performance. We are playactors which is of course another way of saying hypocrites.

Too many Christians are in the grandstand when they should be on the team. But we are all participants in eternal issues, whether we know it or not. "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." We cannot play hands off and answer not a word. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," but He wants us to stand up and be counted

1. Caleb...wholly followed the Lord God" ([Josh14:14](#)). [Matthew 21:27-31](#)

- **THE CHALLENGING CONTEST-** ²² Then Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. ²³ Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*. ²⁴ Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God." **So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken."**

First the prophets of Baal

"O Baal, hear us!" **But *there was no voice; no one answered.***

Psalm 115:4-8

Second the prophet of God

"LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel and I *am* Your servant, and *that* I have done all these things at Your word. ³⁷ Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the LORD God, and *that* You have turned their hearts back to You again."

✓ **We must test God by faith, not with doubt**

Malachi 3

Gideon's fleece- Judges 6

Deuteronomy 6:16; Matthew 4:5-7

Christian service is not doing something for Christ, but is doing those things which He has appointed and assigned us.

THE CHALLENGING VICTORY- ." 38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that *was* in the trench. 39 Now when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; **and they said, "The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!"**

✓ **We must let God's victories convince us.**

A drenched altar is a sorry sight, but it is only the drenched altar that God sets on fire. When we get to the place where it can't be done unless God does it, God will do it! We must build the altar and prepare the sacrifice but we cannot kindle the flame. "All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down." Vance Havner - TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

Building or repairing the altar talks about restoring a state of deep personal devotion, prayer, and total surrender to God.

When the fire fell on Carmel, the people did not say, "Elijah, he is the great prophet!" but "The Lord, He is the God." God's purpose is not to show us strong in His behalf, but Himself strong in our behalf ([2 Chronicles 16:9](#)). Facing Goliath, David prayed that all men might know not that there was a David in the camp, but "that there is a God in Israel" ([1 Samuel 17:46](#)). Elijah's prayer on Carmel was that "this people may know that thou art the Lord God..." ([1 Kings 18:37](#)). When that is our objective, then the fire will fall and we shall see revival. We begin with, "Hallelujah, Thine the glory!" and end singing, "To God be the glory, great things He hath done."

Ali won by corner retirement (RTD) after Frazier's chief second, Eddie Futch, asked the referee to stop the fight after the 14th round.

Ali- June 3, 2016 (74)- 1984- Parkinson's disease

Frazier- 2011 (67)- diabetes & high blood pressure liver cancer