

FAST 2026

A BATTLE OF ALTARS!

(1 KINGS 17:1-3; 18:1; 18:18-40)

I. WHAT IS AN ALTAR?

A. AN ALTAR:

1. Word in Hebrew—"mizbeach"—(a place of sacrifice). Word in Greek—"bomos"—(high place for pagan worship).
2. Other words used of altar in the OT: high place, shrines, groves of trees, "under every green tree."
3. AN ALTAR =
 - a) A place of worship.
 - b) A place of sacrifice.
 - c) A place of prayer
 - d) A place where divinity meets humanity.
 - e) A "place where the spiritual realm has the legal right to influence the physical realm." (James Aladiran)
4. The spiritual realm is more important & powerful than the physical; the physical realm was born out of the spiritual realm.

B. DO WE HAVE ALTARS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

1. NO, not like the Old Testament. (Jewish temple was destroyed in AD 70. The last sacrifice happened at that time.)
2. YES, but it's a different kind of altar. The Lord spoke to their request! He gave them a promise!
3. **1 Cor. 6:19**—"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have from God..."
YOU ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD (Holy Spirit)
4. **1 Peter 2:9**—"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own people..."
YOU ARE THE PRIEST
5. **Romans 12:1**—"I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice..."

YOU ARE THE SACRIFICE

6. **Matt 6:6**—"But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father..."
(Consider the ministry of Jesus: Did He ever go into a room to pray? The room is really the secret place of the heart.)
YOUR HEART, YOUR MIND—YOU ARE THE ALTAR

II. A BATTLE OF ALTARS!

A. ELIJAH'S ALTAR:

1. **1 Kings 17:1-3.** Elijah had a vibrant, intimate relationship with the Lord so much that he heard from God and his prayer impacted the physical weather; there was a 3 year drought.
2. **1 Kings 18:1.** Notice that he hears from the Lord again and has direction about the next step.
3. **Daniel 11:32**—"Those who do wickedly against the covenant, he shall corrupt with flattery; **but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.**"

B. THE BATTLE LINES ARE DRAWN!

1. **AHAB & JEZEBEL:** They were the king & queen of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Jezebel was a princess, daughter of King Ethbaal, King of Tyre (Sidon).
2. **BAAL:** Canaanite god of storms (rain) and fertility—it was believed that he helped crops to grow and for women to be fertile with babies. Ahab & Jezebel promoted and supported these prophets of Baal (and Ashtoreth) with government money.
3. **ELIJAH:** the prophet of the Lord God.
4. **THE CONTEST:** 2 altars, a sacrificial bull placed on each altar with no fire under it. Each is to call on their god; the god who answers by fire...he is god.
5. **Notice:** the prophets of Baal agreed to this. They believed that Baal could answer by fire. Why? Previous experience!

6. Verses that demonstrate Satan's power on earth: 1 John 3:8 / Eph 2:2 / 1 Pet. 5:8 / John 12:31 / 2 Cor. 4:4 / Rev. 12:9 / 2 Cor 11:14 / Acts 26:18

C. THE BATTLE OF ALTERS! (1 KINGS 18:25-40)

1. The prophets of Baal go first. They cry out for hours and leap around the alter, but no one answers.
 2. Elijah mocks them: “maybe he is in the bathroom.”
 3. **Notice v.28**—“they cut themselves, as was their custom...” A major form of currency in the spiritual realm is BLOOD. The result: still nothing happened.
 4. Elijah @ 3:00pm, rebuilds the broken altar (represents the national altar of Israel), he arranges the wood under it, and then the sacrifice. Then he pours out all over it what is most precious: a huge amount of water!
 5. Then he calls upon the Lord...and FIRE FALLS FROM HEAVEN! (The language here points to a lightning strike.)
 6. HOW DID ONE MAN shut down the ability of 850 prophets to access their god? Consider the strength of his altar.
 7. We look around our nation and it seems like the forces of darkness are winning. Why is that?

➤ WEAK ALTARS

➤ STRONG COMMITMENT...on the wrong side!