



## Devotional Guide for April 15-21, 2024

These devotions are prepared for you each week by Pastor Kevin to use for your own personal devotions with the Lord, and are designed to prepare you for the message next weekend.

### Monday, April 15<sup>TH</sup> “Double-minded and unstable in all they do”

**Scripture: James 1:2-8** NIV

James starts off his letter hitting one out of the park—that believers should consider trials as reasons for “pure joy” (v.2). Joy in trials is possible, when believers consider how God works through those trials to build them up spiritually. Godly wisdom can give believers the capacity to understand the world in light of God’s Word, and also according to His purposes. James wrote of being double-minded. He condemned believers who were trying to serve two masters at the same time.

*Question: How do you strive not to be “double-minded” in your faith?*

### Tuesday, April 16<sup>TH</sup> “I will surely present myself to Ahab today”

**Scripture: I Kings 18:1-15** NIV

The background: Elijah’s return to Israel signals the reversal of the drought that I Kings 17:1 decreed would occur. Through Obadiah, Elijah glimpses his homeland as a battleground, between the state-sponsored idolatry of false gods like Baal and Asherah, and then the persecuted faithful of Yahweh. Their meeting marks the first step toward the climactic contest between the religious combatants on Mount Carmel. Jezebel, the evil queen with Ahab, is one vicious and vengeful woman. In a way, Jezebel most represents the official and violent oppression of God’s prophets. Obadiah, in a cowardly way, does not wish to go to the evil king Ahab, to let him know of the prophet Elijah’s return... for Ahab hates Elijah and anyone who stands with Yahweh. These 15 verses serve as the prequel to the Scripture lesson we will use on Sunday (verses, 16-39).

*Question: Would you bravely present yourself to someone who wanted you dead, being able to trust in the Lord?*

### Wednesday, April 17<sup>TH</sup> “How long will you waver?”

**Scripture: I Kings 18:16-21** NIV

As Ahab and Elijah meet, Ahab alludes to and blames Elijah for the current drought in the land. The cause of the drought, however, was not Elijah, but rather, Ahab’s rejection of Yahweh in favor of Baal.

Elijah extends an open invitation to all Israelites for a challenge, which suggests the national importance of this coming event and the issue to be decided. Mount Carmel is a mountain ridge overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, near modern Haifa. Jezebel was importing Baal, the national god of Tyre, to replace the Lord as Israel’s national god. Asherah was worshiped as the wife of Baal. When Elijah asks the Israelite people how long they are going to “waver between two opinions” (v.21), he is showing how their religious ambivalence can’t continue... because Yahweh demands exclusive allegiance.

*Question: Is there anything in your life that seeks to take the place of your loyalty to the Lord? If so, how can you remove it from your life?*

### Thursday, April 18<sup>TH</sup> “The god who answers by fire—He is God”

**Scripture: I Kings 18:22-29** NIV

After the people do not answer him, Elijah lays down the challenge he is proposing—to have the one true God answer by fire. Fire was a common indication that God is present. Elijah asks the true God to prove His existence by sending a direct, visible answer. After a morning of silence from the false gods of Baal and Asherah, Elijah begins to taunt the false prophets. These prophets begin to cut and slash themselves, a form of self-mutilation, common in ancient mourning rites. This shows a last-ditch effort to rouse what appears to be a lethargic Baal. At about sunset—after an entire day praying and pleading with Baal, the false prophets had produced no result. This provides the perfect setting for Elijah’s true God to answer by fire, as we read “...there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention” (v.29). The thrill of the contest had been forgotten.

*Question: How do you think these false prophets felt with the silence from their god known as Baal?*

### Friday, April 19<sup>TH</sup> “The Lord—He is God!”

**Scripture: I Kings 18:30-39** NIV

Elijah got the people’s attention, rebuilt the altar of the Lord, and then had the failed prophets pour water on his wood and sacrifice not just once, but three times! The water-drenching foreshadows the coming rain and also assures the crowd that what follows is not some prophetic trick by Elijah. Elijah’s simple, direct prayer contrasts the day-long failed prayer of the false prophets. After Baal’s silence, the answer from Yahweh is decisive, dramatic, and persuasive... as the fire raining down from on high brought about the worship of the people of God once again.

*Question: Can you grasp the power of this spectacular answer to prayer?*

**Sunday, April 21, 2024**

**8:30 and 10:45 am** (Livestream @10:45 am)

**James 1:2-8** NIV and **I Kings 18:16-39** NIV

Message: **“Raining Fire! (Elijah on Mount Carmel)”**

Worship theme: **“Altar’d People”**

