

## WEEK 3 – MOUNT CARMEL – MOUNT OF DECISION

Much of this week's devotion's content was sourced from Chapter 2 of a book by Ed Robb. 2019. Mountaintop Moments.

### MONDAY – Speak to your mountain



**1 Kings 18: 36-38** *At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and have done all these things at Your command. Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that You, Lord, are God, and that You are turning their hearts back again." Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.*

Mount Carmel is a significant mountain in northern Israel. Covering an area of approximately 265 km<sup>2</sup>. Covered in oak, pine, olive and laurel trees. Today there are many hiking trails, and the views are spectacular. Commanded over by a statue of Elijah.

The Biblical significance of Mount Carmel is Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal, where God demonstrated His power through fire from heaven. The great showdown between God and Baal. And where the Israelites had to decide whether they would come back to God or continue following the false gods.

We, too, will have our own showdowns where we will often

have to choose between the world and God. "But, like the Israelites, we tend to want the best of both worlds. We hang onto our "temple in Jerusalem," yet we allow our golden calves to muddy the spiritual waters of our faith in the one true God." (Ed Robb, *Mountaintop Moments*). We have to answer the question "Are you with Me or against Me?" There are no fence-sitters.

**Reflection:** What are you facing today? Are there tough decisions you need to make? Or are you finding it difficult to see where God is in all this? Are you standing on your own Mount Carmel facing a showdown between the world and God?

Ask the Lord to answer you.



**Prayer:** God, Your holy fire has served as a mighty beacon for centuries, lighting the way for those with the courage and faith to choose the narrow road. Give me the courage to decide to do the same. AMEN

## TUESDAY – Mountain mission



**Colossians 3: 17** *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

I think we would all agree that no matter how good our intentions are, somewhere along our faith journey, we have slid partway down the mountain. The reality is that it is frighteningly easy to do! We may still have God at the core of our lives, but what about the edges? Have we fudged these a little? Where materialism, success, work and pleasure have perhaps crept in as idols? Or where we doubt whether this faith thing is real.

In his book “Slaying the Dragon”, author Antonio Iozzo becomes addicted to opioid painkillers after a serious motorcycle accident. During his journey to get off Oxy, he becomes familiar with compromise. The non-addictive painkillers didn’t work as well as Oxy did. So he again began to take small amounts of the opioid just to boost the other drugs and bring more relief. It’s just a small amount .... Which led once again to addiction.

This is what the Israelites found. It became easy to slip into worshipping other gods. That life seemed easier and more attractive. As with us, the compromises seem easy and harmless. Or the way of Jesus just seems so difficult and uncertain, with no clear answers.

This is when we need to cry as Elijah did, “*Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that You, Lord, are God, and that You are turning their hearts back again*” (1 Kings 18: 37). The cry from Mount Carmel to ignite the fire!

**Reflection:** At your core, you are committed to Christ. But what about the edges? Are they beginning to fray and unravel? Draw back to God.



**Prayer:** Lord, give me the courage to choose Your ways. Give me the strength to follow what will be so much harder. Give me the desire to follow my mountain missions. AMEN

## WEDNESDAY – Echoes from the mountains



**1 Kings 19: 11-13** *The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”*

The saying goes, “For every mountaintop there is a valley”. So too for Elijah. After Mount Carmel, he slid into a period of despair. But he made the decision to lean into God. He found his footing again and went on to anoint future kings. “And when this happens, God faithfully has a way of awakening me, of opening my eyes to clearer understanding by reminding me: There are others like you.” (Ed Robb). Our job is to decide to stay close to God. Perhaps God whispers so that we need to lean in closer to hear.

False gods and worldly mindsets scream loudly, while our Lord God whispers. And herein lies the problem. Do you find it easier to

hear the world than to hear God? Sometimes it will need to be an intellectual decision because you just feel so far away from God. From the top of Mount Carmel to the valley below, we need to decide that: [His] word is a lamp for [our] feet, and a light on [our] paths. (Psalm 119: 105).

### **Reflection:**

Where do you need God? Are you being chased by fear or led by love?

Mount Carmel is the place where you decide to follow Christ. So that in the valley you can look up and know that you are looking into the face of God.



**Prayer:** Holy Spirit, let the fire awaken our hearts, let our ears hear the whisper, and so rekindle the flames of our faith. AMEN

## THURSDAY – The mountains are calling



**Psalm 121: 1 & 2** *I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

Why do I feel so at peace in the mountains? Why do my problems seem less consuming there? Why do I feel the majesty of God there?

A soaring eagle can alert us to God's presence.

The towering mountains can speak peace to the soul.

A bubbling mountain stream can calm a frantic heart.

There are times when the choice to follow Christ is difficult. When you have prayed and there are no answers. When you are told His timing is perfect, but nothing changes. When you know you need to trust God but nobody tells you how to do that. You know you love your Lord but ....

Have you ever felt this way? "In times like these, we need to remember that God isn't distant or disinterested, or sitting on the sidelines watching. Nor is He outnumbered or outmatched. Sometimes He breaks through to us through Scripture, giving us a clearer perspective. Or He sends a friend to encourage and cheer us" (Ed Robb). We need to remember we are not alone. We may not feel Him close or see Him working in our lives, but He is always working in someone's life. You need to know that He says, "I am still here. I hear and see you, and I will restore you."

And it is because of the decisions we made on Mount Carmel, that we know this is true even if we don't feel that way.



### **Meditate:**

So when you're on your knees and answers seem so far away  
You're not alone, stop holding on and just be held  
Your world's not falling apart, it's falling into place  
I'm on the throne, stop holding on and just be held...

If your eyes are on the storm  
You'll wonder if I love you still  
But if your eyes are on the cross  
You'll know I always have and I always will  
AMEN  
(*Just Be Held, Casting Crowns*)

## FRIDAY – Climb every mountain



**Isaiah 52: 7** *How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"*

Just keep climbing. As we go along this journey we call life, there will be many mountains to climb; many challenges to face. But we have been to Mount Carmel and declared our love for God. He will not abandon us, no matter how we feel. And when we have slogged our way to the top, let us stand and praise our God; then bend down and take the hand of a struggling traveller below us.

From all the mountaintop moments, God has been a mighty light on the path of those who chose His way. Today He is still shining a light on the paths we must take. One step at a time – just doing the next right thing. And all those individual paths will lead to another mountain – Calvary. Here is where the ultimate

showdown took place. And the One left standing was Christ alone. The One who gave everything for us. To whom we say, "My God how great thou art."

But our Mount Carmel moment is not just about us. We are called to share the Gospel, love others, stand for truth and justice, speak for the oppressed, meet the needs of people and share generously of all that we have. In our world of 2025, the need for God's people to decide to commit anew to Him rather than the world, has never been more crucial.

*Two roads diverged in a wood,  
and I – I took the one less traveled  
by, And that has made all the  
difference.* (The Road Not Taken,  
Robert Frost)



**Prayer:** Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Write these words, Lord on our hearts so that we may fellowship with You all the days of our lives.  
And all God's people said – AMEN