

Can Believers Access Supernatural Power Today? | Pastor Mark Driscoll

- All right, if you've got your Bible, find 1 Kings chapter 18 in the Old Testament. We're continuing our Elijah series. I hope you're enjoying it. And today is a guaranteed nuclear mind melt. That's where we're going. That's what we're doing. And so what we learned at the beginning of the study of Elijah is that God sent the prophet to pronounce judgment on Ahab, the passive king, and Jezebel, the controlling queen of Israel. And God said, you've not honored me. You've not regarded me. Therefore, I am going to withhold rain for more than three years. And there will be judgment that comes upon the nation. Well, that indeed happened. And where we find ourselves in the story today, it's been 3 1/2 years without rain. And the economy is devastated. The crops are decimated. The livestock are dying. Everything is under judgment. Despite all of this, there's not been repentance from the king and the queen. They continue with their hard-hearted rebellion against God, inviting the worship of demons in the form of Baal, a male deity, and Asherah, a female deity, both demonic, into the nation of Israel. Well, what happens today is the man, Elijah, who prayed that it wouldn't rain, God answered that prayer for 3 1/2 years. And today he's going to pray, and God's going to answer the prayer and send rain. And what I think is really interesting, we live in the valley. This is basically a monsoon. And if you're brand new, it's coming. You're gonna see it. I'll never forget the first monsoon when we moved here about eight years ago or so. A long extended time, it's very dry. Everything dies. The ground just bakes like clay. Everything is hardened. And you wonder, is it ever going to rain? And then one day it rains all at once. That's a monsoon. And so when the monsoon hit, I'll never forget the clouds rolled in and the wind kicked up. The wind was incredible, just howling. And it started toppling trees because the root system is so shallow because the ground is so hard and the water is so rare. So next thing you know, trees are just getting blown over by the wind. And then the lightning strikes and just lights up the sky. And then the skies grow dark with the clouds. And then just thunder hits and it feels like the earth is shaking. And then water just comes in a deluge and it hits the ground. But the ground is so baked and hardened that it can't soak in. So now you get flash flooding. And now you've got trees and debris that are being carried and swept away. That's exactly what they're going to experience in Israel. But just imagine if it hadn't rained for 3 1/2 years. Everything is just decimated and devastated and dying. And so what God's gonna do, he's gonna have Elijah pray, Elijah's gonna send rain. We're gonna look at it in a moment. But what we would call this is a miracle. And we're asking the question today, can believers access supernatural power? Is our God a God who still does miracles? And if so, can we access his power and invite it into our life? When the Bible speaks of America, it'll use a variety of words. Sometimes miracle, sometimes sign, sometimes wonder, sometimes power. Power, and when God works through someone, it says that the hand of the Lord is on them. You're going to read that with Elijah today. And here's the storyline of the Bible. The storyline of the Bible is that there are two realms that form one reality. There's the unseen realm and the seen realm. There's the spiritual world and the physical world. Initially at creation, these two worlds operated together as one reality. For example, we see in the opening chapters of Genesis, there's God and angels and there's human beings and they're together in the garden, the seen and the unseen, the physical and the spiritual are together. Satan even shows up on the scene, a fallen cursed angel that's become a demon. And then sin occurs, human

beings sin against God and there is division between the realms. So now there's the unseen and the seen. And a miracle happens when the unseen realm invades the seen realm. When the supernatural invades and overrides the natural, that's a miracle. And so what we're going to see today are a succession of miracles. And so here's what happens when a miracle occurs. And a miracle is this, a miracle is an unrepeatable event achieved by supernatural power. It's an unrepeatable event achieved by supernatural power. Unrepeatable means a miracle is something that God does once and doesn't do all the time. This is the opposite of science. And the Bible is not anti-science, it transcends science. Science operates according to something called naturalism. And that is that the world is a closed system and it can't be invaded by God and also the demonic. And so everything runs according to repeatable natural laws. So for example, water boils at the same temperature every time and you can test and retest. A miracle by definition is something unrepeatable. That's why we call it a miracle and not a Tuesday. It doesn't happen all the time. And scientists struggle with this. They're like, okay, so, you know, a miracle happened, prove it, you're like, well, it happened once, it doesn't happen all the time. It's unrepeatable and it only happens by supernatural power. Meaning the only explanation is something beyond the natural invaded the natural and it created something supernatural. Here's why God does miracles. I'll give you a few reasons and then we'll jump into the text. Number one, miracles remind us of what the world was like when God was finished and everything and everyone was good and very good and there was no sin. God was regularly doing supernatural things and we were in his presence and everything was beautiful until sin occurred. Number two, miracles reveal God. In this occasion, we just saw previously a fire come down from heaven and everybody bowed down. They're like, the Lord is God, the Lord is God. And it's gonna go from a fire to a flood. And when God shows up in power, you can't deny that God is real. He reveals himself as real. Number three, miracles vindicate God's servants. Elijah here has been hated, despised, opposed and he has been the most wanted man in Israel for 3 1/2 years. But now when God answers the first prayer that it wouldn't rain and will now answer the next prayer that it will rain, it vindicates him. It's God's way of saying, that's my servant and I am pleased with him. In addition, miracles convert sinners. People get converted, they become Christians, they come to faith in God in one of two ways, persuasion and power. How many of you, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, it was more persuasion, you had questions, objections, you have a lot of research, homework, you needed footnotes, you had a long list of things that mentally you needed to work through to put your faith in Jesus. How many of you, that's you? Raise your hand, I know you want to. You're tidy people, you like things in order, okay. How many of you, it wasn't persuasion, it was just power. God just showed up and you're like, I don't know. He healed me and I like him, I don't know. God just sometimes shows up and sometimes he just saves people through power. He just heals them, an angel, a dream, a vision, something supernatural. This was my mom. My mom got saved and she got healed in a prayer meeting. They prayed to Jesus, she got healed. She's been pro-Jesus ever since. You ask my mom, you're like, well, what was the argument? The argument was, I got healed, that was it. God just showed up. How many of you, God showed up in your life? You're like, he's real and he's in my life and I'm in. That's what's happening here. God's showing up in power so that people will come to meet him. In addition, miracles deliver God's people. Sometimes miracles deliver God's people physically. We see this in the days of Moses where he parts the Red Sea

so that they could escape the soldiers who were following them from the kingdom of Egypt. Sometimes God miraculously delivers people emotionally. Some of you have had trauma and deep hurt and brokenness and pain and God the Holy Spirit can do a miracle and he can heal you from the inside out with inner healing. Sometimes God heals a broken body. You're injured, you're sick, you're dying and God restores your health. Sometimes people, they've been through so much. I mean, this world is just so difficult for human beings to just endure. That mentally you get broken and confused or anxious or depressed and God can heal that too. God finds creative ways to deliver his people from whatever is against them or oppressing them. Number six, miracles stir up faith in believers. If you know the Lord and then God shows up, your faith grows. All of a sudden you're like, I knew he was real and now I see it and it just births a greater level of faith and hope in me. That's why if you believe that God is real and he's alive and he's at work, you should live a life of expectancy. He has shown up, he will show up and I don't wanna miss it. And then lastly, miracles point us to the kingdom of God. One day when Jesus comes back, the curse is lifted, everyone and everything is miraculously, supernaturally, eternally healed. There's a little foreshadowing of that today when this curse is lifted and rain comes so that there can be life and flourishing. So we're gonna jump into this miraculous story of Elijah. It's such a significant story that Jesus and his half-brother James both repeat the story. So as we prepare for 1 Kings 18, if you wonder, okay, does God really do miracles? Well, Jesus said, yes. So here's what Jesus says about the Elijah story, Luke 4:25. Jesus said, in Israel, in the days of Elijah, the heavens were shut up for three years and six months and a great famine came over the land. No rain, no wealth, agriculture dies, livestock dies, economy dies. Unless you agree with God's vision, you don't get God's provision. That's what happens in Israel. James, Jesus' half-brother says it this way and he tells us that the key to the accessing of Elijah's supernatural power was a fervent prayer life. He says it this way, in James 5:17 and 18, Elijah was a man with a nature just like ours. Elijah was like us. This is what's so encouraging. You can read the Bible and he had to be a bit of a superhero. I bet you had a cape. I bet you had a E on his chest for Elijah. He's Elijah-Man. No, he's just a regular guy like you and me. This is encouraging. You don't need to be incredible because God is incredible and God can do incredible things through normal people. And that's what we love about Elijah. So he says Elijah was a man with a nature like ours and he prayed fervently. How did he access God's power, God's presence, God's provision? It's prayer. The amount of prayer in your life likely corresponds with the amount of power in your life. It's how you connect to the Lord. And praying can be something you do individually, silently, God can hear your thoughts. You could pray corporately. In addition, when we sing, just so you know, that's how we pray together, with a drum. And so that's really good prayer. He prayed fervently that it might not rain. And for three years and six months, it did not rain on the earth. And then he prayed again. And heaven gave rain and the earth bore its fruit. Jumping into the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 18:41 through 46 Elijah, he's the prophet, says to Ahab, the politician. It's always the prophets against the politicians. It's always God against government. Can I get an amen? All right, we're living in the days of Elijah. Ahab was, as we examined previously, five generations, demonic family, ruling and reigning in Israel. He married Jezebel, who was a demonic, seductive, horrific, controlling woman. The Ahab spirit is passive. The Jezebel spirit is controlling. The Elijah spirit is assertive. So Elijah comes here to rebuke the king. Nobody rebukes the king, but Elijah does, because he has no fear, because he lives in the

fear of the Lord. The only way to overcome fear and fear of man and a spirit of fear is in the fear of the Lord. And so he confronts Ahab. He said to Ahab, go up, tells him what to do. Eat and drink, for there is a sound of rushing of rain. What he says is, it's time to rain. The rain has finally come. So Ahab went up to eat and drink. Isn't it interesting? Elijah never obeys Ahab, but Ahab obeys Elijah, because the king has authority, but the prophet has anointing. And anointing is always greater than authority, because it's divine authority. Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. This is where they just called down fire from heaven. And there was the showdown between the prophets of Baal and the prophet of God, and they sacrificed two bulls, and they laid them, and they prayed to their demon gods, and no fire came. And Elijah prayed to his God, and fire came and consumed. So they're back at this place. And this was the center of worship of Baal in Israel, demonic counterfeit high place, worshiping a demonic false god. And he bowed himself down to the earth. What he is doing, he is openly publicly praying, and he's doing so by kneeling, and he's showing reverence, and respect, and honor, and submission to God. Elijah is not a man who stands up in arrogance, he bows down in humility. The Bible says that God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. And he's here humbling himself. And sometimes your soul needs to tell your body to agree. Right, if you're excited about the Lord, and we're in worship, feel free to let your hands know to participate, right? And if you're feeling overwhelmed at God's goodness, and you need to kneel down, and just, you know, humble yourself before the Lord, sometimes it's good to remind your body to agree with your soul. And so he humbly bows down to pray to his God, with his face between his knees, and he said to his servant, go up now, look toward the sea. God says, it's time to rain, I've just prayed. And so he went up, and he looked, and he said, there is nothing. And he said, go again, seven times. The point is this, don't just pray, keep praying. Sometimes people are like, I asked God, and he didn't do anything, seven times. The man of God keeps praying. And this is not a test of God, this is a test for the man of God. And sometimes God says yes, sometimes God says no, sometimes God says later when we pray. And sometimes he wants us to ask a few times, so that we will grow in faith. And the point is this, friends, if there's something that you've stopped praying for, or about, maybe you should keep praying. Maybe it's not time just yet, but that time is coming. And the seventh time he said, behold, a little cloud, like a man's hand rising from the sea, just starts very small. You know, usually the big things of God start in very small ways. And he said, go, say to Ahab, prepare your chariot, and go down, lest the rain stop you. What he says is, there is a flood coming, we got a little mini Noah situation here, you better get in your chariot and get to high ground. And in a little while, the heavens grew black, now it's monsoon season, with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel, and the hand of the Lord was on Elijah. And this is the anointing power and presence of the person of the Holy Spirit. When you hear that the hand of the Lord is on someone, that's the Holy Spirit. It says the same thing of John the baptizer, who is like Elijah and comes in the spirit of Elijah, the Holy Spirit says that the hand of the Lord was upon him. The most important thing in our life is to have God's hand over our life. See, Elijah doesn't have power, but he has the hand of God. He doesn't have money, but he has the hand of God. He doesn't have a spouse, he doesn't have children, he doesn't own a home, but he has the hand of God over his life. And that's the key to the life of Elijah. The hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. So let me unpack the story here. First, this is what's

really beautiful, God blesses his enemies. These people, this government hated God. I mean, can you imagine a godless government? I mean, I'm glad we've evolved beyond these things. So there's a godless government that continues to defy God. And for 3 1/2 years, they don't repent, no repentance, no rain, unless repentance goes up, rain doesn't come down that was God's deal with the leaders. Yet here, what does God do? He sends them rain, he blesses them. They didn't earn it, this was grace. They didn't repent, they didn't get saved, they didn't apologize, they didn't change their ways, they didn't stop worshiping demons. God said, you know what, I'm gonna be good to you. You need to know if you are not a Christian, that just because God has blessed you, doesn't mean that God has saved you. God blesses people who are not saved. And the blessing ends when life ends. Ahab and Jezebel, it's gonna rain, the economy is gonna rebound, stock market's gonna go up, inflation's gonna go down, and they're gonna go to hell. And so you can be blessed, but unless you turn from sin and trust in the God of the Bible, the blessing ends when life ends. And God is so good that he blesses even his enemies, but sometimes the enemies misunderstand this, they think, well, if God has been good to me, then I must be good with God. No, you're not good with God, God's just good. And I could see this in my own life. I got saved at the age of 19 in college. As I look back, I see that God was good to me. I wasn't good with God, but God was good to me. In addition, what you see here is they really wanted, they really wanted water, but what they got was fire. So for 3 1/2 years, they wanted rain. Before God sent the rain, we looked in the previous section, he sent the fire. Did they want fire? No, they wanted rain. But here's the big idea. God gives us what we need before he gives us what we want. They wanted provision from God, but they didn't want God. There are a lot of people this way to this day. They're like, I want God to bless me. I want God to provide for me. I want God to heal me. I want God to help me. I want God to serve me, but I don't want God. I don't want the giver, I just want the gifts. And so what God did, he sent fire and then water. Sometimes God gives you what you need, he reveals himself, and then he gives you what you want, his provision. Interesting too, as we look at the man of God, Elijah here, for the first time, a servant is mentioned. I don't know if you caught it as we quickly read the storyline, said his servant was there. We've not heard of this servant before. There's gonna be another servant who comes along a little later in the story, his name is Elisha. But here, this is this unknown servant of God, and he serves the man of God. And here's what I want you to know. He's not famous, but he's faithful. The problem in our world, too many people wanna be famous and not enough people wanna be faithful. He's not famous, we don't know his name. We don't know his job description. We don't know if he did a good job or a bad job, we don't know. But why does God name him? God names him to honor him. You know, and more than being famous, it's just being faithful. And some of you would wonder why hasn't God given me a big ministry like Elijah? Well, let me just say, I don't want Elijah's ministry and I don't think you do either, right? You're like, I'm gonna fight demons all day and hide in a cave and not be married or have children. I'm like, one, two, three, not it. I'm not coveting Elijah's life, right? The whole fire from heaven, that would have been a good day. But other than that, it's a lot of bad days. And sometimes we think, God, why can't I have a big ministry like Elijah? Well, there's only one man in the story that has a big ministry. There's a lot of people that have a little ministry to help. And Jesus said this, he said, we should live our life that when we die and stand before him, we hear well done, good and faithful servant. Friends, God wants you to just be you. God wants

you to do what he made you to do. And God wants you to know that your success is not determined by your role or your impact, but your faithfulness to his calling. This guy, his job was serve Elijah. He did his job and now he's a hero in heaven. We're gonna meet him in the kingdom of God. You're probably walking around with a t-shirt that says, I'm Elijah's servant, right? We're gonna know who he is. We're all gonna say, thank you, good job. In addition, here's what we learn about Elijah. He prays on Mount Carmel. This is significant. So God is worshiped in high places. Like the temple was high up on a mountain. And so literally there were Psalms in the Bible called the Psalms of Ascent that you would sing as you went up to the temple to meet with God. Well, everything God creates Satan counterfeits. So there are counterfeit high places in the Bible where demons are worshiped, child sacrifice and sexual immorality are conducted. And this would have included Mount Carmel. They considered that the demonic stronghold. And it was literally the demons ruling over the people and then the people looking up to the demons instead of looking up to the Lord. And the reason that Elijah prays there is number one, God just defeated their demon God Baal when he sent fire from heaven. In addition, everyone can see him. This is like in the days of Daniel where Daniel opens his windows. He's on an upper story and he prays publicly. He's not ashamed or afraid. Here, everyone can look up and they're like, well, there's somebody up on the mountain. That's Elijah. What's he doing? He's kneeling down. It looks like he's praying. Boom, rain hits. His God is real. This is evangelistic. This is a spiritual declaration that results in a physical demonstration of the powerful presence of the God of the Bible. And then what we see as well, Elijah blesses Ahab. Ahab is his enemy. Here's what he says. Go tell Ahab, rain is coming, run for your life. How many of you, you would have been like, Lord, if you wanna tell him, feel free, but I'm not gonna let him know. Right now, if God said something terrible is gonna happen to your enemy, you're like, good. That's what I was hoping. But here's what he does. He warns him. See, Ahab hates Elijah, and Elijah doesn't hate Ahab. Now, he hates the demonic work that he's doing, but he loves him and he serves him and he blesses him. And he says, you're gonna die unless you run. The flood is coming. Jesus tells us two things that are incredible and Elijah demonstrates them. Number one, forgive your enemies. Is that hard? No, it's impossible. He takes the Holy Spirit in a miracle. That's why the Bible literally says, do not grieve the Holy Spirit and choose bitterness. You're gonna need the Holy Spirit to forgive somebody. And then Jesus says something even more incredible. Don't just forgive your enemies, but bless your enemies. And the blessing is the test of the forgiving. You say, well, I've forgiven them. Well, have you blessed them? Of course not. Well, then you may not have forgiven them because once you forgive someone, the test or proof of forgiving them is blessing them. Ultimately, what I love about Elijah here, he doesn't take it personally, he doesn't make it personal. Ahab has a problem with God and God has a problem with Ahab. Now, Ahab tries to make it a problem with Elijah, but Elijah is saying, actually this is between you and the Lord. And I'm still gonna be gracious and I'm gonna forgive you and I'm gonna bless you, but this is between you and God. I'm not gonna take it personal or make it personal. There are people in your life, they hate you because you love God. So don't hate them. Have love for them and leave it between them and God. And I love the fact that he blesses his enemy. And what we see here is a judgment on the demonic counterfeit false God, the king of the demons in that day, Baal. And Baal was known for two things. He was called the storm God. He was the God of the rain. And so when it didn't rain for 3 1/2 years, it was God's way of saying, you and I are gonna

have a fight and I'm gonna prove to everybody you're not the strong one. It's not gonna rain until I say it's gonna rain. Not only was he the God of rain, number two, he was the God of prosperity. Because if it rained, the crops grew. And if it rained, the livestock could feast. And if it rained, the economy flourished. Here, what we see as well is that in the ancient world, Baal was worshiped, for those of you who were here for the previous sermon, with what animal? A bull, a bull. And for them, a bull denoted fertility and prosperity and strength. And so the ancient symbol of Baal worship was the bull. That's why in 1 Kings 18, the battle between God and Baal included the sacrifice of two bulls because that was the icon and image and representation and embodiment of Baal worship. And so when Baal couldn't send fire, but God did, it showed that God is much greater than Baal. The problem with the Baals is reticent throughout scripture. Various regions will have their location and then Baal. And so Baal is consistent throughout the Old Testament as the arch enemy of the God of the Bible. Literally, it is Satan working on the earth. And so different regions would actually, when you read the Bible, you're like, why are these different Baals? This Baal and that Baal? They would just take their regional name and put it, so it'd be like Phoenix, Baal, Los Angeles, Baal, Portland, Baal, Seattle, Baal. You're like, I see that. And so it's just regions devoting themselves to Baal. Now, if you remember back in the story of the Bible, do you remember the days of Moses that the people of God were supposed to worship him, but instead they created an idol, an image to worship instead? Do you remember what it was? It was a bull, it was a calf. You know what a calf is? A young bull. They literally created a Baal bull to worship. And what color was it? Gold. Because Baal is worshiped when you wanna have prosperity and provision. In 1987, the stock market crashed. In 1989, this appeared near the New York Stock Exchange. That's a Baal. It's a bull. What does a bull represent? A bull market. It's an idol to Baal. And what color is it? Gold. I'm telling you that even though we have new days, we're dealing with old demons. And when we read the story, we're like, it's so crazy. They just, they had a big bull. We got one too. 11 feet long, excuse me, 11 feet high, 16 feet long, 7,100 pounds. Dedicated to the bull market provision. It's Baal worship. And the theme of Elijah is this, that we don't just look at the story, we look through the story. Because the Bible doesn't just tell us what happened in the past, but what always happens, including the present. And so when we look through the story, we're asking, as we see the same themes, as we see the same images, as we see the same activities in different ages and cultures, is it possible that we're dealing with the same demons? Is the unseen realm doing the same thing in the seen realm in multiple times? Yes. When the Israelites came down from the mountain, or if you were present in the days of Ahab and Jezebel ruling and reigning in Israel, that's exactly what they had for public art. Now, that being said, what we see in the life of Elijah is a lot of miracles. And what we see is God doing miracles and Satan counterfeiting them. So let me pivot the conversation toward that. Let me give you just a summary of the miracles we've seen in the life of Elijah. Number one, God stopped the rain for 3 1/2 years in answer to his prayer, 1 Kings 17. Number two, the widow of Zarephath's oil and flour were supernaturally renewed. We looked at that in 1 Kings 17. The widow's dead son was returned to life as the first resurrection in the Bible, 1 Kings 17. We looked at that. God fed Elijah bread and meat twice a day delivered by ravens. We looked at that in 1 Kings 17. God sent fire from heaven. We looked at that last week in 1 Kings 18. This week, God sent rain in response to Elijah's prayer after three years of drought. We just examined that in 1 Kings 18. Here, we also just saw Elijah outran a horse to

avoid a flood. And that's what it says. He outran a horse. How many of you, you're like, I can't do that. I can't run at all. I'm like, how does a man outrun a horse? The hand of the Lord was on him. It was a miracle. I don't know what it looked like. I don't know how it happened. But literally it said, he outran the horse. And let me just say this. If you're a grown man and you run, that's a miracle. We just don't run. And then number nine, fire comes down from heaven two more times. We'll examine that coming up in 2 Kings 1. And then lastly, Elijah was taken to heaven in a chariot. Truly first-class flight, 2 Kings 2. We're gonna look at that coming up as well. Here's what we see in Elijah's life. God shows up and so does Satan. Every time God is doing ministry, Satan's trying to do anti-ministry. Every time God is trying to set people free, Satan is trying to set people in bondage. Every time God does a miracle, Satan does something counterfeit. So what we wanna ask, here's our question. Does the Holy Spirit still do the supernatural things today? But first I wanna ask this question. Do the unholy spirits continue their work today? Is it just in the olden days when Satan and demons would do evil things? No. Give you some scriptures. Here's what Jesus says, Matthew 24:24. False Christ and false prophets. They were in the days of Elijah. Baal and Ashtoreth were 850 counterfeit false prophets that were for hire and they ate at Jezebel's table. But Jesus says that this will continue all the way up until the last days. False Christ and false prophets will arise, perform great signs and wonders so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Jesus says, false prophets, false teachers, false miracles are going to continue. Are we experiencing that in our day? Are there evil people that have incredible power? Are there things being done that are inexplicable apart from demonic understanding? When we're in a day when the government can seize your minor child, take away your parental rights, mutilate their genitalia, give them hormone blockers, puberty blockers and hormones for the rest of their life. And if they grow up and want to just, you know, end anything that looks like a possibility of a healthy future, I have to say, you know what? That just seems real demonic to me. Like why do we hurt children? Why don't we let them grow up and make their own decision? And why does the government think that they overrule the parents? That's demonic. Number two, 2 Thessalonians 2, 9 and 10. I appreciate that. Not everybody likes me. Oh no. I am a one in five star review senior pastor. I have been since '96 and I intend to stay in my lane. I intend to stay in my lane. Okay. In addition, do demonic unholy spirits still work today? 2 Thessalonians 2, 9 and 10 says this. The work of Satan is counterfeit power and signs and miracles. He'll use every kind of evil deception. This can be in government, as we're seeing in the days of Elijah. This can be in politics. This can be in religion and spirituality and also education. As in the days of Elijah, they closed all the believing schools and took away all the Bible teachers. Jesus as well says this in Matthew 12:39. An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign. I believe in the power of God. I believe in the presence of God. I believe in the supernatural. We're gonna talk about this in a little more detail in a moment. I don't believe that things just happened in the days of Elijah. I believe that we're all living in days like Elijah and we need God to show up in power as he did in the days of Elijah. But Jesus says this, a wicked and adulterous generation seeks for a sign. And so what we do want to do is we want to follow the Lord, not follow the signs. And here's what I believe. If you're always chasing signs and wonders and miracles and I'm going to this place because I heard something happened and I'm gonna follow this person and do this and do that and follow the Lord. Fix your eyes on Jesus. But here's what I believe. If we follow the Lord, I believe that miracles will follow us. I believe that if

we follow miracles, we could get led astray to counterfeit signs, wonders, and miracles. So I believe in them, but I don't pursue them. I pursue the Lord and they follow us. You need to know that supernatural things have happened often in my life, but it wasn't because I was chasing them. I was following him. And as a result, his miracles followed me. Lastly, as we're talking about what God creates, counterfeit signs, wonders, miracles, the people in the days of Elijah, like there's 850 false prophets and one true prophet and Baal runs the government and runs education and runs spirituality. And this crazy lone prophet, is he right or wrong? You need to be discerning. You need to determine what is real and counterfeit, what is from God and what is against God. 1 John says it this way, chapter four, verse one, beloved, if you're a child of God, you're loved by God. You're loved. Let that just emotionally rest on you. Beloved, you're beloved, do not believe every spirit. Instead test the spirits to see whether they are from God for many false prophets have gone out into the world. We've looked at it in the days of Elijah, there was one true prophet, 850 false prophets. What that means is there's more counterfeit than real. There's more bad Bible teaching than good Bible teaching. There's more lying politicians than truth telling politicians. And most of what's on the news is literally press releases from hell. It's a lot of fakery, a lot of forgery, a lot of fraud. So you gotta be discerning. You don't wanna be jaded, you wanna be wise. You don't wanna be fearful, you wanna be wise. You don't wanna be scared, you wanna be wise. Is this true or false? You test this by the word of God and the spirit of God. Jesus says, my sheep hear my voice and they know me. You're like, that doesn't sound like my shepherd. So we're gonna examine, this is all my introduction. So, no, it is. So the question is, okay, Satan's still working. And what was the primary most powerful spirit at work in their day? Well, it was actually two deities. It was a male deity, Baal, demon, female deity, Jezebel. And they were literally manifested through King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. You remember that? So let me do this. So 3,000 years ago, Jezebel, let me deal with Jezebel and the Jezebel spirit. 3,000 years ago, Jezebel is a demonic evil woman. A thousand years later in Revelation chapter two, the Lord Jesus Christ says to the church at Thyatira, this I have against you. You tolerate, if you tolerate, she will dominate. You tolerate that woman Jezebel who calls herself a prophetess. She's a false prophetess and seduces people to sexual sin. So the Jezebel spirit is very spiritual, very seductive and scheming. Spiritual, seductive, scheming. We're now 3,000 years from the days of Elijah. We are 2,000 years from Jesus' rebuke of the tolerating of the spirit of Jezebel in Thyatira. In addition, the Jezebel spirit wants to come alongside the man in power with authority to control and dominate and destroy him. Question, does the Jezebel spirit still work actively in our culture today? Okay, take a deep breath. I've been waiting for this for a month. Okay, this is Stormy Daniels. I'm gonna share with you some facts from Reuters, New York Magazine, The Spectator and Religious News Services Definitely more progressive and left-leaning, but considered mainstream media outlets. Are you ready? Her birth name Stephanie means royalty and refers to a queen. She's a Jezebel. Her stage name Stormy is a nickname for Baal, the Canaanite storm god. Her last name Daniels means God is my judge. The company she works for is called Wicked Entertainment. She has a triple goddess tattoo on her neck as a counterfeit Jezebelian trinity. She's a professional witch or medium. She's on record saying that she works with a demon named Lilith. Lilith is an ancient pagan myth that Adam's first wife was not Eve, but was Lilith. Lilith was fiercely independent and she cheated on Adam by having intercourse with Satan and creating a line of people who

were a counterfeit of Jesus Christ, part demonic and part human. It's a myth, but she works with that demon Lilith. And a few years ago, we had the Lilith Festival. It was all female artists. Now you know why, it was Jezebelian. In addition, she lives in a former witchcraft coven and haunted house with a Catholic partner. She does spells with clairvoyance at the Wicked Wednesday Market in New Orleans and online. She's on record saying from November, 2020 to November, 2021, I did 250 Oracle readings. A tarot card deck is how a witch, a medium, which is a counterfeit of Jesus Christ. There's one mediator between us and God, the man Christ Jesus. A witch or a medium is a counterfeit trying to connect us, not to the Holy Spirit, but to the unholy spirits, not to God, but to Satan. And the way they work, they'll use tarot cards and they will ask the spirits to then speak through the deck. Certain cards together have certain meanings, certain cards in certain directions have other meanings. An Oracle deck is used by a higher level witch. It's a double tarot card deck. It's a double tarot card deck. She professionally consults with the demonic and that's what she does for her additional job. I told you Jezebel, spiritual, seductive, scheming. In addition, she hosts a reality show called Spooky Babes, where she goes into haunted houses, searching for demons. Last one, she sat down for an interview with Olivia Newsy, an award-winning reporter from New York Magazine. This is the article. I'll read a portion to you. Stormy Daniels saged the room and shuffled the Oracle deck, double tarot card deck. It was the evening of April 1st, this was recent, and the woman at the center of the legal drama that led to the first criminal indictment of a US president, Jezebel always wants to seduce the man in power, had agreed to ask the guides, the demons, this is the reporter, to help to see more clearly the past and present and what she calls the potential or likely outcome. Reporter sits down, says, I wanna talk to you about the future. She says, let me ask the demons. In the interview, she raised her hands and pressed the empty space between her palms. She spoke quietly, what can you tell Olivia about Donald Trump? And then it says she was having trouble connecting with the realm of the spirits. She's literally conjuring demons. She shuffled the deck again, there, between her palms, the force field of energy swelled, demonic presence. She dealt the cards as if by magic, the room shifted. The reporter says, my ears began to ring, tension spread across my forehead, my eyes filled with tears. I looked across the table and met the dealer's gaze. She was crying too. And then I'll read one more line. The reporter says, quote, I was bewildered by the wave of emotion that seemed to wash over both of us at once. Why did we cry? "Because it's real," Stormy Daniels said. "It's chaos and death and destruction." The Bible doesn't tell us what happened, it tells us what always happens. Our war is not always against flesh and blood, the apostle Paul says, but powers, principalities and spirits. In addition to what we see, there are some things that God sees and occasionally he allows us to see them as well. I'm a prophet, that's my job. I don't write books of the Bible, I preach them, that's my job. If you sleep with a Jezebel, you are not an Elijah. If you sleep with a Jezebel, you're either an Ahab or a Jezebel. We all live in a world that is Jezebelian. The word that is used in Revelation 2 for her sexual sin is porneia or pornography. Is pornography an issue? Yes, why is it so powerful? There's a demonic force at work behind it. And it is a spirit of seduction, it is a spirit of sensuality and scheming. The result is this, the only way to stand against a Jezebel is to be like Elijah filled with the Holy Spirit. You can't beat a Jezebel in the flesh, you can't. The Jezebel will dominate. All of us probably have some conviction in our life about sexual sin. And as we hear this, we don't just wanna use the Bible as binoculars to judge

others, we wanna use it as a mirror to first judge ourselves. And if you've struggled with sex, if you've struggled with pornography, if you've struggled with lust and self-control, you're like, why is this such an incredible foe? Because it is demonic. Because it's a powerful force at work in the world. And so the good news is this, you can be free if you repent of your sin. God, I was wrong, you were right. I don't want unholy spirits, I want the Holy Spirit. Fill me with the Holy Spirit, the fruit of which is self-control. And then like Elijah, live by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is possible for anyone through repentance of sin and faith in Jesus Christ and a sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We need an Elijah. There's a lot I'd like to say, but I will say this. The only way to defeat these evil spirits at work in the world is if the leader is an Elijah. That's it. See, I'm not political, I'm biblical. And sometimes the political has a lot to learn from the biblical. And the biblical has a lot of rebuking for the political. I'll leave it there, I'd like to say more, but I'll just, something for you to think about. Something for you to think about. So the question first, first question, then we'll answer the second question. This is all my introduction, then we'll get to my point. So first question was, do unholy spirits still work today? Yeah, okay. The question then is, does the Holy Spirit still work today? Now it's interesting in some churches, they wouldn't answer quite like that. This is actually a big debate within Christianity. And there are various views of the work of the Holy Spirit in the miraculous ways, or what is called the sign gifts, speaking in tongues, miracles, healings, things like that. One group are the cessationists, and they would say simply, the Holy Spirit won't act. He doesn't do today what he did yesterday. But in the past, he was very active, but today he is not. In addition, there is then what I would call functional cessationism. Cessation means ceased. And their premise would be the Holy Spirit can act, but he doesn't. Like he can do whatever he wants, but he doesn't really do anything anymore. Like he can if he wants, but they're very suspicious that God would show up in power. Then there is the continuationist view, and that is the Holy Spirit can and does act. It's also called charismatic. If you don't know, I'm charismatic. Charismatic, I am. I love Jesus. I love the Father. I love the Holy Spirit. Whatever God wants for me, I want it. I believe God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And I'll tell you this, if Satan's still showing up, I hope the Holy Spirit is too. Because Satan is not a cessationist. Satan is not a cessationist. Satan doesn't say, well, I used to do those things, but I don't do them anymore. No, he's gonna do everything he can to kill, steal, and destroy. And so we're asking the Holy Spirit to do whatever he wants to stop that evil. And then lastly, some of you come from backgrounds that are more spiritually abusive, and that is the word of faith movement. The word of faith movement says the Holy Spirit must act. Now, what oftentimes happens within the church, because we just read with Elijah, fire from heaven, he prays, rain comes, he outruns a horse. Like that's a great day. That's a great day. And that's what, can God, does God still do these things? And what oftentimes happens is, these two extreme polarizing Christian positions, they have a lot of conflict. The cessationists say, no, no, no, God doesn't do those things anymore. They are worldly in their thinking. There was a philosopher named David Hume, and he said that the world was closed in a natural system, and there was no supernatural intervention. Cessationism is a great grandchild of an atheist philosopher. I wouldn't go so far as to call it false teaching, but I would say it dances on the line vigorously. I tend to be an expository Bible teacher. I preached through books of the Bible for 27 years as a senior pastor. Many who also preach through books of the Bible tend to be cessationist, which is weird. That means there are certain verses they've got to

just read fast and hope nobody asks questions. And you read the Bible and you're like, oh, I wish I lived in the days when God did things. And you don't live with a sense of expectancy. In addition, what they will do is they will argue with a word of faith people, and the word of faith people will say, well, you can make God do things. If you have enough faith, if you fast, if you pray, if you tithe, you're gonna force God's hand, you're gonna make God show up in your life. I'll tell you one of the benefits of being God, you do what you want. That's just one of the benefits of being God. God's not heaven going, I said, no, but I mean, they spoke in tongues and then they tithed. Like, what am I gonna do? You know, I gotta take orders now. No. And so what happens is in the word of faith community, people who are suffering are abused spiritually. Oh, you have cancer? It's 'cause you didn't have enough faith. Whoa, whoa, whoa. Well, God didn't answer your prayer? Must have not have fasted long enough. It literally is taking someone in their most difficult season and then spiritually damaging them. And so what I would say is, I understand why a lot of people who were word of faith become cessationists. They're like, every time they talked about the Holy Spirit, those people were crazy. They're claiming things and freaking out and it looked like, you know, it looked like Mardi Gras meets happy hour, meets frat party, meets New Year's. Those people were out of their mind. So you know what? I don't want any of it. I understand this, but let's just, here's what I'll tell you. Just agree with me and the Bible and Jesus and the Holy Spirit. God can do whatever he wants to do. And no one can stop God from doing what he wants to do. And no one can make God do what they want him to do. But we can ask him to do, and then he gets to decide what he will do. We call that prayer. We call that prayer. And so the key to accessing the power of God is prayer. We see this in the life of Elijah. We saw this at the beginning of the story in 1 Kings 17, where he prayed and it didn't rain for 3 1/2 years. And then we saw today, he prayed and it rained after 3 1/2 years. And James 5:17 says this, Elijah was like us and he prayed fervently. The key to power coming down is prayer going up. The key to power coming down is prayer going up. And he prays a lot and God sends down power often. Let me say just practically, if you're watching online, post your prayer request. The believers there will pray for you. And our team will pray for you. If you have a private prayer request and you're watching online and hundreds of thousands of people do every weekend, just send it to hello at real faith.com. And if it's private, we'll pray for you privately. And you are church family need to know this on the back half of every worship set after the sermon. And the sermon will have an end by the way, if you're visiting. So if the sermon ends, in the back, we've always got a prayer team. People who love Jesus and are filled with the Holy Spirit and love you. And they'll pray over you and they'll pray with you. And we never want you to come here and leave needing prayer, not being prayed for. Our prayer team is always in the back and is available to you today. Let me close and then give you some encouragement. The story of Elijah points to the story of Jesus, the greater Elijah. Elijah is a little story that points to the big story of Jesus Christ. Just like there was a day of judgment and slaughter in the days of Elijah, Jesus will return, he will bring fire with him. There will be a judgment and there will be a slaughter. Just as in this story of the sending of rain, God lifted the curse that he had put over the land so that it could flourish. So Jesus will return our King of Kings, high and exalted, seated on a throne, ruling over the nations, ending all of the campaigns of the Ahab's. Can't wait for that day when we don't vote ever again. And he will lift the curse and he will bless the land and he will heal the people. And today Jesus is alive and well. And

just like Elijah waited patiently, Jesus is waiting patiently. And what he's doing, he's blessing his enemies and answering the prayers of his people. I'll close with two encouraging stories. Does God still work today? This was a recent news story. This is a 16 year old boy who died for two hours. I'll read it to you. 16 year old Sammy had gone into cardiac arrest. His heart suddenly stopped. I mean, I've got a 17 year old son. I can't even imagine the horror that these parents were experiencing. Workers at the gym, paramedics and doctors all performed CPR for two hours. Doctors left his devastated parents to say their goodbyes. So this is a confirmed, verified medical miracle. He was dead and he returned to life at the hospital in front of the doctors. The cessationist was like, I don't know. I got poke holes in it. Well, just practice the ministry of silence. The rest of us are gonna sing and you just sit there with a judgmental attitude. And then doctors left his devastated parents to say their goodbyes. Five minutes later, quote, his mom says, I started talking to him, just telling him how much I love him and how sorry I was that we didn't know how to save him. Here's the line. She says, suddenly as I was, what do you guess that next word is? Praying. She says, as I was praying. She says, as I was praying, my husband said, oh my gosh, he's moving, exclaimed Jennifer, their miracle child. He pulled through and actually overcame death. The medical team came racing back in and the couple started yelling that he was alive. These are professionals who have been doing this their entire lives. Each and every one of them said that they have never seen anything like this before. We did in the days of Elijah. Ever, never had they ever pronounced someone dead and suddenly they came back five minutes later. Because Sammy went without oxygen to his brain for two hours. Everyone expected a catastrophic brain injury, but instead simply short-term memory loss that has gotten better. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Satan is at work. God is at work. God is greater. Greater is he who is at work in you than he who is in this world. Amen. We're gonna worship in a moment. I got one more story to encourage you. One more, my last point. This is a dear couple, part of our church family. They've been with us for five years. The first time I met the husband, it was on their first visit. The room was full and we didn't have enough seats. And so they were quickly unloading chairs and then creating more rows. This man walked in, started stacking chairs. I didn't know who he was. I walked over, I was like, hey, my name's Mark. Who are you? He's like, my name's Joseph. I said, how long you been coming? He's like, this is my first visit. Oh, so you walked in the door and rather than taking a seat, you started seating other people. You nominated yourself as a volunteer usher. He served. He literally didn't even make it 10 feet into the room and he was ready to serve. There's a beautiful couple. How many of you know the Trufin's and you love them? Yeah, I do, they're great. His wife is on staff and here's their story. And then we will worship.

- Hi, my name is Joseph Trufin. And this is my wife, Lydia. And we've been attending the Trinity Church for five years now. We just wanted to share something amazing that God has done in our life this year. So last year I was in one of the most painful injuries I've ever had and it was a really hard season in our life. Basically my C5 and my C6 tore out of place and ended up resting on a nerve on my right hand. I lost functionality and mobility of my right arm. We had a lot of people praying for us. We had a lot of the guys from Real Men pray for us. And then we also had a lot of the women from Real Women pray for us. Pastor Jimmy Evans was here a month ago and he was talking in his message, toward the end of his message, about God binding. He

talked about God binding fear. He talked about God binding anxiety, about God binding depression, and also about God binding physical injuries. And right after that message and the worship session, God healed me and I was able to raise my arms in worship for the first time in over 10 months. And we just wanted to share that in today's day and age, that God still does miracles, that God still answers prayers.

- And we've experienced that.

- And we've experienced that. We're just a walking testimony here at Trinity Church.