

FIRE FALL

Day Ten: Understanding the Times

*And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice,
that Elijah the prophet came near... 1 Kings 18:36a*

There are natural seasons, and there are spiritual seasons. We understand distinct moments in time, and we understand general periods of time. The problem we often face is a lack of understanding what hour we are currently in. It may be a winter season, but there may be hours of spring preparation that will either benefit or hinder the future harvest. At the same time, when harvest abounds, planting the seeds is out of place. We must discern the times.

As Elijah began to pray, he was aware that approximately 70 miles due south, there would be an evening gathering at the Temple in Jerusalem. Even as the priests would be preparing to offer up fire at the altar on Zion, Elijah was asking for fire to fall down at the newly rebuilt altar on Carmel. The timing of this encounter was important. It was a moment in which chronos time and kairos time would intersect.

While the original text does not indicate a specific time of the sacrifice, it is understood that, in the natural, the day was rapidly coming to an end. Whether darkness was hours or minutes away, there was a time of distinct contrast about to manifest. In their minds, the beginning of night was viewed as the newness of the next day. With a release of the past, they would step into the unforeseen future.

It is within this context that the fire would fall. The fire will always fall in God's perfect timing. The same God who led Israel with fire by night, is the same God who stirs our hearts in this hour of sacrifice to be expecting His fire to once again fall, and illuminate our place in His kingdom. As the previous season ends, the brilliance of God's fire will once again contrast so greatly with the darkness of the world that man will see His glory and be drawn to Him.

And so we pray:

Father of Light...we ask You to stir our hearts for the sacrifice of the hour in which we live. As living sacrifices, may we pursue the fire of Your presence with all that we are. No matter how deep the darkness that seems to surround us, we ask for the ever increasing brilliance of Your flame to burst forth both within us and all around us. Make us aware of the hour that is upon us. Give to us wisdom like You gave to the sons of Issachar who knew not only the seasons, but knew also what to do within them. Teach us to redeem the time in the midst of evil days so the contrast of Your glory may be seen more clearly.

In Jesus' name we pray...AMEN