

# Introduction

Division is not new and continues to be around

Stuck on a Fence

Belief and Unbelief

The Prophet Elijah Believed

The Challenge

The Match and Responses

Simple Message of the Gospel Still Causes Division Today

## Division in America

### Abraham Lincoln's speech in 1858

"A house divided against itself cannot stand."

I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free.

I do not expect the Union to be dissolved - I do not expect the house to fall - but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

It will become all one thing, or all the other.

### Civil War April 12, 1861 – April 9, 1865

For more than 80 years, people in the Northern and Southern states had been debating the issues that ultimately led to war: economic policies and practices, cultural values, the extent and reach of the Federal government, and, most importantly, the role of slavery within American society.

### Kansas-Nebraska Act (Known as the Nebraska Doctrine)

The Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed the Missouri Compromise, created two new territories, and allowed for popular sovereignty. It also produced a violent uprising known as "Bleeding Kansas," as proslavery and antislavery activists flooded into the territories to sway the vote. Political turmoil followed, destroying the remnants of the old Whig coalition and leading to the creation of the new Republican Party. Stephen Douglas had touted his bill as a peaceful settlement of national issues, but what it produced was a prelude to civil war.

### Dred Scott Decision

In 1857, the United States Supreme Court upheld slavery in United States territories, denied the legality of black citizenship in America, and declared the Missouri Compromise to be unconstitutional.

More than 3 million men fought in the war.

Two percent of the population—more than 620,000—died in it.

In two days at Shiloh on the banks of the Tennessee River, more Americans fell than in all previous American wars combined.

## Text

[1Ki 18:20-22 KJV] 20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. **21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD [be] God, follow him: but if Baal, [then] follow him. And the people answered him not a word.** 22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, [even] I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets [are] four hundred and fifty men.

## **Division is not New in Hearing God's Word**

John 7:41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? 42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? 43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

**Paul and Barnabus in Iconium:** Acts 14:3 But the apostles stayed there a long time, preaching boldly about the grace of the Lord. And the Lord proved their message was true by giving them power to do miraculous signs and wonders. **4 But the people of the town were divided in their opinion about them. Some sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles.**

**Paul Under Arrest in Rome:** [Act 28:23-24 KJV] 23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into [his] lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and [out of] the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

## **Stuck on the fence between Belief and Unbelief.**

[Mat 28:17 KJV] 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

## **Why Some Believed**

John 7:31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this [man] hath done? 32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. ... 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given]; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

## **Some think they have things figured out (Is this Unbelief)**

John 7:45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? 46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. 47 Then answered them the Pharisees, **Are ye also deceived?**

## **Some are afraid to speak up (Is this Unbelief?)**

[Jhn 7:13 KJV] 13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for **fear of the Jews.**

[Jhn 19:38 KJV] 38 And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for **fear of the Jews,** besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave [him] leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

## **Paul and Barnabus at Iconium**

[Act 14:2-4 KJV] 2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. 3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which

gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.  
4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

## **Paul was stoned in Lystra**

[Act 14:19-20 KJV] 19 And there came thither [certain] Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew [him] out of the city, supposing he had been dead. 20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

## **Elijah Believed God and Challenged a Nation**

[1Ki 17:1 NLT] 1 Now Elijah, who was from Tishbe in Gilead, told King Ahab, "As surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives--the God I serve--there will be no dew or rain during the next few years until I give the word!"

[1Ki 17:1 KJV] 1 And Elijah the Tishbite, [who was] of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, [As] the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

## **The Challenge from Elijah**

[1Ki 18:23-29 KJV] 23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay [it] on wood, and put no fire [under]: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay [it] on wood, and put no fire [under]: 24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. 25 And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress [it] first; for ye [are] many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire [under].

## **The False Worshipers go First.**

26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed [it], and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But [there was] no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. 27 And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he [is] a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, [or] peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. 28 And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. 29 And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the [time] of the offering of the [evening] sacrifice, that [there was] neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

## **Elijah's Turn**

[1Ki 18:30-37 KJV] 30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD [that was] broken down. 31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: 32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. 33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid [him] on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour [it] on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. 34 And he said, Do [it] the second time. And they did [it] the second time. And he said, Do [it] the third time. And they did [it] the third time. 35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at [the time of] the offering of the [evening] sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou [art] God in Israel, and [that] I [am] thy servant, and [that] I have done all these things at thy word. 37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou [art] the LORD God, and [that] thou hast turned their heart back again.

## God Responds to Elijah's 63 word Prayer

[1Ki 18:38-40 KJV] 38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that [was] in the trench. 39 And when all the people saw [it], they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he [is] the God; the LORD, he [is] the God. 40 And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

## The Gospel Message, Simply Put by Paul

### The Message is for Everyone.

[Act 13:16-41 NLT] 16 So Paul stood, lifted his hand to quiet them, and started speaking. "Men of Israel," he said, "and you God-fearing Gentiles, listen to me. 17 "The God of this nation of Israel chose our ancestors and made them multiply and grow strong during their stay in Egypt. Then with a powerful arm he led them out of their slavery. 18 He put up with them through forty years of wandering in the wilderness. 19 Then he destroyed seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to Israel as an inheritance. 20 All this took about 450 years. "After that, God gave them judges to rule until the time of Samuel the prophet. 21 Then the people begged for a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years. 22 But God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.' 23 "And it is one of King David's descendants, Jesus, who is God's promised Savior of Israel! 24 Before he came, John the Baptist preached that all the people of Israel needed to repent of their sins and turn to God and be baptized. 25 As John was finishing his ministry he asked, 'Do you think I am the Messiah? No, I am not! But he is coming soon--and I'm not even worthy to be his slave and untie the sandals on his feet.' 26 "Brothers--you sons of Abraham, and also you God-fearing Gentiles--this message of salvation has been sent to us! 27 The people in Jerusalem and their leaders did not recognize Jesus as the one the prophets had spoken about. Instead, they condemned him, and in doing this they fulfilled the prophets' words that are read every Sabbath. 28 They found no legal reason to execute him, but they asked Pilate to have him killed anyway. 29 "When they had done all that the prophecies said about him, they took him down from the cross and placed him in a tomb. 30 **But God raised him from the dead!** 31 And over a period of many days he appeared to those who had gone with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to the people of Israel. 32 "And now we are here to bring you this Good News. The promise was made to our ancestors, 33 and God has now fulfilled it for us, their descendants, by raising Jesus. This is what the second psalm says about Jesus: 'You are my Son. Today I have become your Father.' 34 For God had promised to raise him from the dead, not leaving him to rot in the grave. He said, 'I will give you the sacred blessings I promised to David.' 35 Another psalm explains it more fully: 'You will not allow your Holy One to rot in the grave.' 36 This is not a reference to David, for after David had done the will of God in his own generation, he died and was buried with his ancestors, and his body decayed. 37 No, it was a reference to someone else--someone whom God raised and whose body did not decay. **38 "Brothers, listen! We are here to proclaim that through this man Jesus there is forgiveness for your sins. 39 Everyone who believes in him is declared right with God--something the law of Moses could never do.** 40 Be

careful! Don't let the prophets' words apply to you. For they said, 41 'Look, you mockers, be amazed and die! For I am doing something in your own day, something you wouldn't believe even if someone told you about it.'"

## **Believers Act**

[Rom 10:9-13 KJV] 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.