



**FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH**

# **“The Bible, Part 128”**

**June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018**  
**Pastor Darryl R. Curtis**

Family Life Baptist Church  
Now Meeting at 6439 S. Cedar Street  
Lansing, Michigan 48911  
Phone: (517) 393-9399  
Email: [info@familylifebc.com](mailto:info@familylifebc.com)  
Website: <http://www.familylifebc.com>

***Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.***



The Bible, Part 128

**Matthew 7:24**

**24 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:**

Thank you for listening and thinking with me as we study God’s Word to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

Our text for today gives us some perspective on the lifestyle and philosophy that the LORD Jesus Christ anticipates that His people will develop during their sojourn on planet earth. Jesus declares, in **Matthew 7:24:**

**24 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:**

We have an ongoing debate in our country about the President’s ban on immigration from certain Islamic countries. Many people in our country equate Islam to Christianity simply because both institutions are religions. But the two religions are drastically different.

The Lord told Israel, in **Deuteronomy 7:1–5:**

**1 “When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you,**

**2 and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them.**

**3 Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.**

**4 For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.**

**5 But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire.**

The debate between Christianity and Islam is not the first debate in history between a religion that acknowledges the Lord and one that does not. God sent the Israelites into the Promised Land to totally destroy the nations that worshipped idols for a simply stated reason: they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods.



Interestingly, the Lord did not specify that He was particularly concerned about the Israelites turning away from Him themselves. This was because of the experience of the Exodus, the defeat of the Egyptians, and the Wilderness wandering, in which the Israelites were able to maintain life in the wilderness for 40 years. Moses reminded the Israelites how they survived the wilderness experience, in **Deuteronomy 29:5**:

**5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet.**

Imagine wearing the same pair of sandals for forty years on a daily basis as you walked through unpopulated land, and for forty years, your sandals did not wear out. The robes that the Israelites wore as they left the Promised Land were in wearable condition forty years later. The Israelites ate manna every day, and each time they ran out of water, Moses struck a rock and water flowed out of the rock.

My point is that the Israelites would probably be much less likely to turn away from the Lord because of the historical track record that they had with Him. To the Israelites, the Lord was not an abstract heavenly figure that someone perceived in a dream and then told them about; the Lord was the One that supplied their physical needs in a miraculous manner on a daily basis. If you don't believe it, just go outside, speak to a rock and see if the rock gives you a drink of water.

The basic and most important difference between the Lord and the other gods that man worshipped is history, history being defined as experiences that people have personally had with the Lord. If you want to experience the real God, you have to experience Him in history, meaning in personal experiences. The real God has the power and the presence to extend His power down from heaven in order to act, physically, on our environment in ways that affect us. But those gods that the Lord tells us not to worship have no such power; they are simply concepts that someone tells us about in a convincing fashion. During the reign of King Ahab in Israel, Ahab's wife Jezebel decided to remove the worship of God from the nation of Israel in favor of the worship of Baal, the idol worshipped in her homeland. The Lord raised up the prophet Elijah to oppose the worship of Baal, and the Lord acted against Israel. **1Kings 17:1** records:

**1 And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word."**

Imagine living in a fertile land, a land flowing with milk and honey, abundant crops and livestock with a prosperous economy, and suddenly, the normal flow of water, including evaporation, condensation, rain and evaporation again, was interrupted. The water evaporated, but condensation and rain ceased, and a condition known as a drought ensued. Imagine being the King of the Land having been told by a prophet of the Most High God that this physical condition was going to occur, and then seeing it come to pass. Even on the hottest days, there is water on my grass at the break of dawn because of the dew that forms as a function of the lowered nighttime temperature, but in Israel, during these days of Ahab and Elijah, not even nighttime temperatures caused the evaporation of water out of the atmosphere in Israel.



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

Drought conditions occurred in Israel for three years. That was more than a long enough drought for the Israelite king to conclude that the condition was not an atmospheric anomaly, but actually was an intentional act of God. This episode continues, in **1Kings 18:1, 17–19**:

**1** And it came to pass after many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, “Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth.”

**17** Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, “Is that you, O troubler of Israel?”

**18** And [Elijah] answered, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals.

**19** Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

Elijah had a message for the Israelites that he met on Mount Carmel. **1Kings 18:20–21** records:

**20** So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel.

**21** And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered [Elijah] not a word.

In order to win the allegiance of the people to God, Elijah had to do more than preach a sermon. Elijah intended to prove that the three year drought affecting Israel was an act of God rather than atmospheric anomaly. To do so, Elijah intended to prove that God was able to act physically in the world. Elijah gave the challenge, in **1Kings 18:22–24**:

**22** Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

**23** Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it.

**24** Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” So all the people answered and said, “It is well spoken.”

Elijah, the prophets of Baal and the people of Israel were all familiar with burnt offerings, but Elijah proposed to prove that the Lord could miraculously light a fire under an offering without the assistance of man, just as the Lord miraculously kept the garments belonging to the Israelites marching in the wilderness from falling apart. **1Kings 18:25–**

**26** continues:

**25** Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.”



**26 So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, “O Baal, hear us!” But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.**

Elijah ridiculed Baal’s lack of action. **1Kings 18:27** records:

**27 And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.”**

The prophets of Baal redoubled their efforts to make Baal act, but they were only putting on a show, because they knew that Baal had never actually done anything. Baal was the figment of someone’s imagination that had been passed down to them. They worshipped Baal because of the authority of Jezebel, but they never actually believed that a man made statue had the power to act independently. But they did put on a good show, as **1Kings 18:28–29** records:

**28 So [the prophets of Baal] cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them.**

**29 And when midday was past, [the prophets of Baal] prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.**

The episode unfolded exactly as Elijah intended. Elijah knew that Baal did not have the power to do anything, and he felt sanguine as the prophets of Baal proved his point. But once the day passed and the evening fell, Elijah decided that it was time to let the power of the Lord come down. **1Kings 18:30–35** records:

**30 Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to 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, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.”**

**32 Then with the stones [Elijah] built an altar in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed.**

**33 And [Elijah] put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, “Fill four waterpots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.”**

**34 Then [Elijah] said, “Do it a second time,” and they did it a second time; and he said, “Do it a third time,” and they did it a third time.**

**35 So the water ran all around the altar; and [Elijah] also filled the trench with water.**

Elijah’s offering to the Lord was different than the prophets offering to Baal in that the offering and the wood upon which it laid was soaked in water. It would have been difficult for Elijah to light a fire to consume this offering even if he intended to do so, because the altar and the entire altar area was drenched, and there was a trench full of water running all around the soaked site.



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

But Elijah was not worried, because he had no intention of lighting a fire. Elijah was counting on the Lord to do that. And **1 Kings 18:36–39**:

**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 Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word.**

**37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.”**

**38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench.**

**39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!”**

The people acknowledged the Lord because the Lord acted. The Lord proved Himself, not by giving us a set of principles to follow or by informing us about the afterlife, but by acting, physically, upon the earth. And the discipline that we must study to prove to ourselves that the Lord is real is not theology, but history.

At the beginning of the Lord’s history, He tells us, in **Genesis 1:1**:

**1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**

As the creator of our environment, the Lord has power over it, and can suspend, augment or even change that which we call the “laws of nature” in order to achieve His objectives. The laws of nature are not binding on God; they are simply our observation of that which the Lord has done. The Lord has the power to do something different whenever He chooses. But most importantly, the Lord has the power to intervene on planet earth at His whim, and does so to prove to us that He exists and is the One upon whom we should depend to give us the power and wisdom to navigate the circumstances that He gives us. Thus, the Lord makes it clear to us, even as He made it clear to Israel in the historical episode of Elijah, in **Matthew 7:24**

**24 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:**

He who decides to live according to the dictates and doctrines of the Lord is building his life on the rock. The Lord has the power, ability and will to sustain us through the vicissitudes of life if we chose to depend upon Him. He tells us, in **Matthew 7:25**:

**25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.**

The drought occurred in Israel, but Elijah cast his lot in with the Lord. The Lord brought the three year drought to Israel to get their attention, and then proved Himself as the rock of Israel as He used His power to convince the people to follow Him.

The Bible in which we believe is replete with prophetic utterances and the record of the Lord’s historical forays into the life on mankind on this planet. The Bible proves itself as a book of history, and the fact of the matter is that those that have gone into the Holy Land to find physical artifacts of events recorded in the Bible have found them. Dr. Nelson Glueck, one of the world’s greatest archaeologists who had more than 1,000



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

discoveries under his belt was interviewed by Time magazine before his death in 1971 where he said, “It may be stated, categorically that no archaeological find has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological finds have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible; and by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical descriptions have often lead to amazing discoveries.”

The truth of the Bible remains untarnished by any archeological or scientific discoveries. Theories may controvert the Bible, but when those theories are put to the test, they are found to be false. Just as Baal was powerless to consume the sacrifice that was made to Him, Islam is powerless to show any historical accomplishments that Allah has ever made. Interestingly, the Koran, the book that the Muslims hold as sacred, contains doctrine, but no history and only one prophecy, that being, that Muhammad would return to Mecca, which is a prophecy which the author could fulfill without the intervention of a divine being.

Elijah shows us, on Mount Carmel, that standing on the Word of God as given in the Bible is in fact standing on the rock of history, the rock of prophecy and the rock of reality. The things recorded in the Bible actually happened, as the Bible is the record of the intervention of the Lord God in human history. There is no parallel for the Bible in any other human religion, as none of the deities in any other religion have actually been able to act.

Scripture tells us, in **Matthew 1:22–23**:

**22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:**

**23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”**

Isaiah’s prophecy was that God would be with us. Isaiah insisted that the God of Heaven that sent down the fire to lick up the water in the trench around Elijah’s sacrifice would actually be born as a human male through the womb of a virgin. Isaiah died in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, so his prophecy of the Virgin Birth was certainly not a self-fulfilling prophecy as was Muhammad’s prophecy that he would return to Mecca.

Isaiah’s prophecy about the Virgin Birth was by no means the only Biblical prophecy concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. There are over 300 predictive prophecies in the Old Testament, which was completed 400 years before the coming of the Christ, that tell us about the life that the Lord Jesus Christ was going to live.

But the point that we should understand is that the prophetic and historical information that we glean from the Bible is more factual than any human theories to the contrary. We can have confidence that Biblical principles teach us the best way to live on planet earth, not because they necessarily make the most sense to us, but because they are the product of the most knowledgeable individuals that even lived, who drew their knowledge directly from the mind of the God that created the heavens and the earth and has both the perspective to tell us right from wrong and the power to make our obedience to His word profitable to us.



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

We ignore the Word of God at our peril. The Lord tells us, in **Matthew 7:26–27**:

**26 “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:**

**27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”**

The Lord gives us His Word to give us a roadmap to success in life. A lawyer once came up to Jesus with the most important question that a human being could ask. **Luke 10:25** records:

**25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested [Jesus], saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”**

But Jesus did not answer the lawyer’s question. Jesus knew that the lawyer knew the scriptural answer to the question, and Jesus wanted to make the point that the Scripture was the supreme font of knowledge in the universe. So, Jesus responded in **Luke 10:26**:

**26 [Jesus] said to [the lawyer], “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?”**

The lawyer, knowledgeable in the Scripture, answered, in **Luke 10:27**:

**27 So [the lawyer] answered and said, “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’ ”**

As I said, the lawyer knew the Scriptural answer to his question. Jesus simply affirmed the lawyer’s scriptural answer, in **Luke 10:28**:

**28 And [Jesus] said to [the lawyer], “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.”**

The Lord gives us His Word to give us a roadmap to success in life. Jesus declares, in **Matthew 7:24**:

**24 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:**

We study that which the Bible tells us because to do so gives us the information that we need to be successful in this life. Interestingly, much of the information in the Bible is actually counterintuitive, meaning that our thought processes would not lead to us act in the way that the Bible instructs us. But a wise man does not trust in his own wisdom, but rather follows the admonition of the Lord, in **Proverbs 3:5–8**:

**5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;**

**6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.**

**7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil.**

**8 It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.**

The point of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, even with all of the wisdom that Jesus gave the disciples and those that were listening to Him for these verses, is that there is no wisdom in the New Testament that is not revealed in the Old Testament. Jesus tells us, in **Matthew 5:17–18**:

**17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.**



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.**

The wisest man that ever lived tells us, in **Ecclesiastes 1:9**:

**9 That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.**

The Lord completed creation on the seventh day, and the only thing that has changed from that day to this one is that the Lord has revealed more of the principles behind His creation to us. His creation has not changed; we have just become more knowledgeable about that which the Lord did during those seven days that He spent making the heavens and the earth.

The message of the Lord Jesus Christ is to tell us to do that which the Lord says do if we want to be successful in this life, achieve eternal life and to live with Him in the next life. The Lord makes it absolutely clear that there is another land, where the wicked will cease from troubling and the weary will be at rest. The Bible tells us, in **Revelation 22:1-7**:

**1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.**

**2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**

**3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.**

**4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.**

**5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.**

**6 Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.**

**7 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."**

There is nothing that we can do that will ultimately be better for us than to keep the words of the prophecy of this book, the Bible, the divinely inspired written Word of God that contains that which we need to know to please God and live in the Lord's Kingdom. And that magnificent volume tells us, in **John 3:16-17**:

**16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

**17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**

The Lord Jesus Christ died that our sins might be forgiven and that we might receive the benefit for which God sent Him into the world. No alternative religion, including Islam, can make any such claim because the god which alternative religions postulate is like Baal...when they are put to the test on planet earth, they cannot do anything.



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

It is ours to reject all other religions in favor of Christianity, the religion whose founder is the Lord Jesus Christ, who physically came to planet earth, walked the streets of Palestine as a man, performed miracles of providing for people and healing them, and then the greatest miracle in the history of the world, rising from the grave after His death on Calvary's Cross. Luke tells us, in **Acts 1:1–3**:

**1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,**

**2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,**

**3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.**

The life of the Lord Jesus Christ is marked by that which Luke calls many infallible proofs. We can have confidence in the history of the Bible and the record of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us build our hopes and our lives on the rock of the testimony of history about the Lord, and live according to that which the Scripture tells us to do.

Pastor Darryl R. Curtis  
Family Life Baptist Church