

- *Really picking up on the whole chapter, but the verses above were the ones read...*

## Tug of War!

- Get a rope, lay it out down centre aisle!
- Get a couple of people to "volunteer" to help by leading the two teams:
  - *John? Amy?...*
  - then explain that it is going to be everyone verses one leader - and get a few more up to help the leader of the whole church team!
- Get everyone into position, but just before we pull ask:
  - *who is going to win?*
- *With such a certain outcome, not worth doing the tug of war!!*
  - (send everyone back to their seats...)
- But today we will be discovering a time when *one person was more powerful in a contest than a team of 450!*
  - how do you think that happened?
  - *because that person had God on their side!*

## You can't get those here!

- Opening illustration about what we ask for being shaped by who we ask
  - shops?
  - or the size of packet - only ask for one Mars bar in the corner grocer, if you want a multi-pack you go to your favourite supermarket...
- Argue that the same is true of us in our approach to God
  - **who we think of God as** shapes **whether and what we ask of him**
  - and our thoughts are too little, so we ask too little

## Who are you asking of?

- Huge contrast is being drawn throughout this passage between **God** and **Baal**
  - *(show pictures of Carmel on data projector)*
  - in the run up to the confrontation on Mount Carmel (1-15), during the confrontation itself (16-40), and indeed in the aftermath as God brings rain again on the land (41-46)
- *Work through the story, highlighting key points:*
  - God speaks, Baal doesn't (v.1, 41ff, and nothing for Baal)
  - God hears, Baal can't (v.26-27, 37-38)
  - God supplies, Baal can't (v.45)
  - God lights fires, Baal can't (v.38)
  - God is powerful, Baal is not (v.39)
- So to the key question, in v.21:
  - *Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing.*

## Now what will you ask?

- Who is God?
  - tame deity we've grown up with, familiar, safe, who doesn't answer big prayers?
  - or Elijah's God, living and active, powerful, and desperately concerned for the honour of his name
- For the true God who we worship is indeed the living and active, powerful God Elijah knew
  - and if we know him as such it will shape the way we pray
- Do we pray for healing, or simply for people to be given the strength to cope with their illness, God's presence with them?
- Do we pray for those around us to become Christians - and expect that God will make himself known?
- Do we pray with Elijah's simplicity, directness and trust?
  - do we know Elijah's God?