

Elijah and the pagan prophets had a powerful encounter on Mount Carmel. (1 Kings 18) The true deity, the God of Israel or Baal, would prove Himself by sending fire to consume a sacrifice. The pagan prophets spent the entire day calling upon Baal, to no avail. They shouted, danced, and cut themselves, all for the purpose of getting their god's attention; and he never responded.

Pagan worshippers spent much of their time seeking to gain the attention of their deity in order to receive his favour and blessing. Some of this mentality had apparently worked its way into Jewish religious life. Jesus warned His audiences against praying like pagans: making a spectacle in public, babbling the same words over and over, trying to impress God and gain His favour. (Matthew 6:5-7) Jesus said: "Do not be like them." (Matthew 6:8) Instead, pray to God as you would talk to a father: "Our Father in Heaven". (Matthew 6:9)

We get God's ear as His children when we come to Him in the Name of His Son, not because we pray long and loud prayers.

Matthew 6:5 "When you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites . . . [or] use vain repetitions as the heathen do."