

An Exegetical Study of 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; 18:45a on the Context of the Ndilo Wari Udan Ritual of the Karo Batak Ethnic Tradition in the Preparation of Contextual Dialogue Points with the Karo Protestant Batak Church

Bernhardt Siburian¹, Haposan Cornelius Sinaga², Julkipri Manik³, Mende Maharani Berutu⁴

1234. Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Tarutung

bernhardt.correspondence1@gmail.com
haposancornelius@gmail.com
julkiprimanik03@gmail.com
mendeberutu962@gmail.com

Abstract

This research aims to find the points of comparison between the name of the Israeli worship from the name of the ritual worship *ndilo wari udan* (calling for rain) of the Karo ethnic tradition through the study of the exegesis of the text of 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; 18:45a in the Preparation of Contextual Dialogue Principles with the Karo Protestant Batak Church in Indonesia. Based on the analysis of the exegesis of the text, the researcher suggests six sub-focus patterns of discussion, namely: 1. It rains only by the word of YHWH, 2. Making known the name of the creator and owner of the universe, 3. Open evidentiary prayer, 4. Declaring one's proper name in the blink of an eye, 5. Having close identification and 6. Avoiding the LORD's heartache.

Keywords : Worship, 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; 18:45a, Batak, Tradition

I. Introduction

One of the elements of Indonesian culture in Karo district, North Sumatra Province is the *ndilo wari udan ritual*, which means the ritual of calling for rain. The ritual is performed during the long dry season in Tanjung Timur village (predominantly ethnic Karo), Deli Serdang district and Seberaya village, Tigapanah sub-district, Dairi district, North Sumatra province, Indonesia. Since the main livelihood of the Karo people is farming and the region is dominated by very fertile agricultural land and a cool climate, the long drought has caused unrest and become a serious topic of discussion among the villagers. Villagers found it difficult to obtain water, rice fields dried up, many plants died and crops failed, causing losses.

In the tradition of belief in calling for rain, it is understood that disasters experienced by humans or a group of humans always have something to do with the disruption of the relationship between microcosm and macrocosm. However, the disruption of the relationship between humans and nature is caused by the actions of humans themselves. This situation is further complicated by the emergence of the concept and atmosphere of human thinking about the need for interaction with something metaphysical or mystical. Because of such a state of mind, the Karo people still believe in primitive beliefs passed down by their ancestors who are still *pemena* (*perbegu*, the religion passed down by the ancestors of the Karo tribe; *parmalim*, Toba). Such beliefs still include the practice of honoring dead spirits or asking shamans for guidance.¹

In its implementation, the *ndilo wari udan* ritual seems to have several mystical (sacred, secret) elements. One of them is the song line *Tembut-tembut Seberaya* (a dance about a king whose son dies) which should not be sung carelessly and should not be documented because it has certain meanings or nuances (perhaps containing taboo elements or nuances, -sexuality). The song's verses may only be sung when a rain-calling ritual is being held.² By the song, the ritual of calling for rain is considered a "transcendent communication attraction" between the sender of the message and the receiver of the message (either through

¹ E. P. Ginting, *Religi Karo: Membaca Religi Karo dengan Mata yang Baru*, (Kabanjahe: Abdi Karya, 1999), 75-76.

² Dina Mariana Siregar, 'Bentuk dan Makna Simbol Tari Tembut-tembut dalam Upacara Adat Ndilo Wari Udan Pada Masyarakat Karo', *Skripsi Prodi. Seni Drama, Tari dan Musik Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Medan*, 2015, 5, <https://jurnal.unimed.ac.id/2012/index.php/-gesture/article/download/2227/1885>. Cited 15 February 2023.

thoughts, words and or actions).³ From this point, it can be assumed that the dancers, their costumes and dance moves are symbols of the parties involved and also as messages in the transcendent communication.

In addition, the *gundala-gundala* mask or *tembut-tembut* of the dancers in the ritual comes from chiseled wood. According to a myth circulating in the community, the wood origin of the mask comes from a tree that was once struck by lightning. If this myth is true, it can be assumed that the ritual of calling for rain contains magical-mystical-dynamic elements. This situation seems to mean that the masks, costumes and dance movements are used as a medium to summon rain. Church members and the general public believe that in these media there are spirits of ancestors (*begu jabu*, ancestral spirits) who help in the process of calling the rain.⁴

In concept, the ritual of calling for rain is done with the aim of asking *Dibata* or “God” for rain in a certain sense. However, in its implementation, the ritual involves the *sibaso teacher* (a person believed to have supernatural powers, a shaman), asking the shaman for guidance. In the process, offerings (*seserahan*) are made to the village god, offerings (*sesajaen*) to the rain-calling medium believed to be the manifestation of ancestors, the practice of honoring the spirits of the dead. In the process, especially when the song *silengguri* (bringing cloudy weather) is sung, it is not uncommon for some participants to experience trance (dancing out of consciousness, crying, and so on).

Before the ritual of calling for rain is carried out, the *raleng tendi* (transferring spirits) ritual is first performed, which is the ritual of inserting the spirit of the land elders to a mediator conducted by the *sibaso teacher* to ask for a suitable and appropriate day to carry out the ritual of calling for rain.⁵ In addition, in the ritual of calling for rain, the ritual of *ertoto ku sembahen* (asking permission to all supernatural powers, *sumangat*) is also carried out to a place that is considered to have magical powers.⁶

It was mentioned earlier that the ritual of calling for rain is performed with the aim of asking *Dibata* or “God” for rain in a certain sense. In this case it needs to be understood that in the *pemena* religion, *Dibata* is a *tendi* or soul that can be present at any time, its influence encompasses all things which is interpreted as an element of everything, the overall unity of the all-encompassing *tendi*. Based on the above information, it can be understood that the belief of the Karo people is close to a form of belief in *tendi*, where the life of *tendi* is interpreted as the same as the spirit (supernatural spirit).⁷

Thus to this point it can be said that the previously mentioned worship in the ritual of calling for rain is of three types, namely: the spirits of ancestors, the spirits of the dead and the spirits of the elders of the land who are considered to have magical powers and it can be presumed that these are close to magical-mystical-animistic practices.

The 2016 Synod Session of the Karo Protestant Batak Church (GBKP) has set decision Number 4.14.2 on Local Wisdom stating: “Regarding old beliefs that have become a tradition in Karo society and are contrary to the Christian faith (such as: *niktik wari*, *cabur bulung*, *ndilo warin udan*, *petalayoken*, *nengget*, *perumah begu*) are still rejected and do not need to be reviewed. This refers to the decision of the previous synod session, namely the 2002 BPL session and the results of the Synod Session.⁸ The subject of this decision was included in the agenda of the synod session due to allegations that there were still in the midst of GBKP church congregations who participated in⁹ the implementation of rituals of these old beliefs in recent years. This situation often causes confusion and differences of opinion that may lead to polemics among the GBKP church congregation and also the Karo ethnic tradition groups against the GBKP church..

³ Indira Fatra Deni Peranginangin, dkk., ‘Traditional Ceremony "Ndilo Wari Udan" as a Transcendental Communication Attraction for the Karo Tribe in North Sumatera’, *Proceedings of the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management Sao Paulo*, Brazil, April 5-8, 2021), <http://www.ieomsociety.org/brazil2020/papers/429.pdf>. Cited 15 February 2023.

⁴ Markus Pindonta Pelawi | Pardomuan Munthe, ‘Tinjauan Dogmatis Terhadap Ndilo Wari Udan di GBKP Runggun Seberaya Diperhadapkan dengan Konfesi GBKP’, *Sabda Akademika: Jurnal Prodi. Teologi STT Abdi Sabda*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (2021), <https://journal.sttabdisabda.ac.id/index.php/-JSAK/article/view/58>. Cited 15 February 2023.

⁵ K. Kurniawan | D. S. Anshori, *Sastra dan Budaya*, 320.

⁶ Dina Mariana Siregar, “Bentuk dan Makna ...”

⁷ Henry Guntur Tarigan, *Percikan Budaya Karo*, (Jakarta: Yayasan Merga Silima, 1989), 82. Dapat juga dilihat pada Reny Pravita, “Konsep Ketuhanan dalam Paham Pemena, Studi Kasus di Desa Tiga Binanga Kabupaten Karo”, *Skripsi Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara* (2021) NIM. 0402163014, <http://repository.uinsu.ac.id/11983/andhttp://repository.uinsu.ac.id/11983/-1/Skripsi%20Reny.pdf>, 41-42.

⁸ Unit Pelayanan i teruh Sekretariat Umum, “Laporen Umum Moderamen GBKP ras Program Kerja 2017”, <https://gbkp.or.id/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/KEPUTUSAN-SKMS-2016.doc>. Cited 16 Februari 2023.

⁹ Elitawati Sembiring, “Bahan PJJ GBKP Rawamangun”, <https://www.gbkpprawamangun.org/2019/09/bahan-pjj-22-28-september-2019/>. Cited 16 Februari 2023.

The situation clearly shows the contrasting views between the GBKP church's decision from the government's protection of the cultural heritage of the ritual of calling rain of the Karo ethnic tradition. In addition, not a few of the literature sources of academic works in this research show little support for Decision Number 4.14.2 of the 2016 Synod Session of the Batak Karo Protestant Church (GBKP). According to the research team, this may be the unavailability of exegesis-biblical studies owned by the church in connection with the ritual of calling for rain that can be used as material in conducting dialog between church and culture and also as material for pastoring people in the midst of church congregations.

II. Review Of Literature

King Ahab was a threat to the covenant tradition of Yahweh and Israel. He was an opportunist who had no conviction or reluctance. But he did not act alone. Jezebel, who was beside him, used her authority and influence as the king's wife in an arbitrary and vicious manner. Like the wives of foreign lands, she continued to worship idols and even cultivated them to excess. When Yahweh's prophets opposed her actions, she plotted to ruthlessly destroy them all. Obadiah, Ahab's wise and Yahweh-fearing chamberlain, did manage to save a hundred of the prophets, but many were sure to perish (1 Kings 18:3-4).

Having done all she could to suppress the true prophets, Jezebel brought hundreds of false prophets who worshipped Baal and Asherah into the palace. This zeal, backed by her strategic position, was a real threat to the religion of ancient Israel. The influence of Canaanite religion had long infiltrated through Israel's neighboring nations, but under Jezebel's influence it spread widely from the palace.

For most Israelites, it didn't matter if they worshipped Baal. Baal worshippers believed that Baal controlled the rain and was responsible for the bountiful harvest. The Canaanite fertility gods offered attractive things for them to worship, while the feasts provided opportunities to satisfy their lust for wine and immorality. Drunkenness and indulging in wanton sexual appetite were obligatory in the religion of Baal. Baal was the king of wine. Intimate relations with devotional prostitutes (male and female) were believed to encourage Baal to enjoy sexual relations with his spouse, thus ensuring fertility for the whole land. Moreover, Baal had become the universal god of the Canaanites, although he was also worshipped in his local forms. The god Jezebel worshipped was Baal Melgart (or simply Melgart; also written Milgart), a form of Baal worship practiced in her home city of Tyre. Jezebel had no difficulty in transferring the influence of this god to Israel. In the Ugaritic text it seems that the title Melgart (har. 'king of the city') indicates that Baal was the ruler of the underworld and his power was not limited to a particular area.

Jezebel's religious program was to strike at the heart of ancient Israelite religion. By worshipping Baal and who had become the universal god of the Canaanites, it is not impossible that Northern Israel and Israel were considered to have come under Canaanite co-optation politically.

Jezebel had no regard for the customs and traditions of Israel. Jezebel, accustomed to the dictatorial kingship in Tyre, could not understand Ahab's grief when Naboth flatly refused her request. She wanted land next to the state palace in Jezreel and as queen her wishes could not be denied. By hiring false witnesses he managed to get Naboth put to death by the elders on trumped up grounds. Elijah, enraged by Jezebel's inhumanity, went to Ahab in Jezreel and announced God's judgment on him, his wife and his entire family. However, because Ahab immediately regretted his actions, the punishment was postponed until the time of his son (vv 27-29).

The hallmark of pagan prophets is passionate behavior (ecstasy), not the content of their proclamation. The prophets of Baal are a classic example of using frenzied activity to "force God" to act. They first tiptoed around the altar, then cut themselves with knives while raising their voices in loud prayers to Baal all day long.

False prophets were prophets who were usually close to the king or the court. These prophets could easily get in touch with the king himself. They tend to be used by the king himself. They were used by the king, and tended to say things that only the king wanted to hear (1 Kings 22).¹⁰

The books of I and II Kings tell the history of the united kingdom and the divided kingdom when David and the people ignored the covenant with the LORD. The story focuses on the characters who were primarily responsible for keeping the covenant in Israel: the kings and the prophets. The voice of the prophets takes center stage in the story of the kings because these messengers appointed by the LORD served as the conscience of the kings.

The most obvious purpose of the Kings account is to complete the writing of the history of the Hebrew kings as a continuation of I and II Samuel. The account of the Hebrew kingdoms implicitly demonstrates the sovereignty of the LORD in Israel's covenant history and the reality of human freedom and accountability for those united with Him in covenant relationship. The prophetic view of Israel's history serves to counsel the king and the people with regard to past transgressions in keeping the covenant and to warn them of serious consequences when they persistently disobey Yahweh's covenant stipulations. Similarly, 1 and 2 Kings contain words of advice and give words of hope to Israel and Judah. God leads

¹⁰David M. Howard, *Kitab-Kitab Sejarah dalam Perjanjian Lama*, (Malang: Gandum Mas, 2013), 237.

human history and remains faithful to His covenant with the Hebrews as His chosen people (cf. Ps 115:5-6). The repeated references to fulfilled prophecies and two historical additions are particularly reminiscent of the Davidic covenant and the LORD's promise to establish kingship in Israel forever (2Sam 7:1-17).

In both books of Kings, each king is judged on his loyalty to the LORD, and prosperity is the result of that loyalty. In contrast, idolatry and disobedience resulted in disaster. Based on this assessment, the kings of the Northern kingdom all failed, while the kings of Judah failed some and not others. Most important in the book of 1 Kings is the work of the LORD through His prophets. They are portrayed as messengers of the LORD who dared to warn the king and the people of Israel not to worship idols and not to despise the commandments of the LORD.

A. Structures And Patterns In The Ministry Of The Prophet Elijah

Elijah became a prophet in the Northern kingdom. The name 'Elijah', which means "Yahweh is my God", illustrates the firm conviction in Elijah's life (1 Kings 18:21,39). The main stories of his life are found in 1 Kings. 17:1 - 19:21; 1 Kings. 21:17-29; 2 Kings. 1:1 - 2:25.

Elijah's life revolved around the conflict between the worship of Yahweh, the God of Israel, and the worship of Baal and Asherah. His task was to awaken the Israelites to their apostasy and call them back to obey the God of Israel (1 Kings 18:21, 36-37). Elijah was a restorer and reformer who sought to re-establish the people's covenant with Yahweh.

The Old Testament is also famous as a book that records many miracles. However, it is not widely noticed that these miracles are unevenly distributed and tend to be clustered. They were also hundreds of years apart in time. Such a series of miracles is found in I and II Kings and occurred through the prophet Elijah and the prophet Elisha.

The first group occurred during the time of Moses, either against the backdrop of the events in Egypt (the plagues) or in the wilderness (the case of the descent of manna, the spring of water, etc.). The second occurred in the New Testament during the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the days of the early church. Each period represents one major transition or crisis. The Mosaic period was crucial to the lives of God's people, and many righteous miracles were performed by Yahweh through Moses. The miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ also proved the truth of His message during other important crises or transitions, and the miracles in the book of Acts played the same role.

The miraculous events in the time of the prophets Elijah and Elisha were not dramatic transitions, but identical to the other two groups, they were critical times for the people of Israel to make a decision, whether to follow pagan worship practices or remain faithful to Yahweh.¹¹

Such a pattern may be relevant for those interested in observing miracles in post-Biblical times, including today. If we keep in mind that miracles occurred at periods in a series (and even in a particular location, such as in the Northern kingdom or in Babylon), the patterns are similar, namely that miracles often occurred at certain times and places and rarely at other times or places, throughout history as well as today. The selected text also falls into an identical pattern. It is evident from the consistency of the repetition of the pattern from the first to the second section that the miracle of the absence of rain and the subsequent rain puts the Israelites to a critical decision: "If Yahweh is the Lord, follow him, and if Baal, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21).

In addition to the pattern mentioned above, there is a certain structural arrangement in the narrative of the prophet Elijah's ministry. Based on the content of the text 1Kj. 17:1-6, the careful reader will notice a structure with units that are ordered in order of magnitude as follows:

- A : The call of the prophet Elijah and Yahweh's word against king Ahab (1)
- B : Yahweh's promise to the prophet Elijah (2-4)
- A' : Prophet Elijah's obedience to Yahweh's word (5)
- B' : The fulfillment of Yahweh's promise to the prophet Elijah (6)

Sections A and A' both describe the things that Elijah did. A describes the call of Elijah to proclaim Yahweh's personhood before King Ahab. Here we see the courage of Elijah to declare the power of Yahweh's authority to King Ahab. Then section A' describes Elijah's obedience to the things Yahweh commanded after Elijah had done what was mentioned in section A.

Sections B and B' both describe the word of Yahweh that came to Elijah and how Yahweh's promise of that word was fulfilled. Part B recounts God's promise to Elijah about His protection and providence. Section B' is Yahweh's fulfillment of the things He promised in section B. Part B contains Yahweh's command to Elijah to leave Israel and hide by the brook Cherith on the east side of the Jordan, along with Yahweh's promise to fulfill Elijah's needs by drinking from the brook Cherith and eating from the food provided by the ravens. Part B' contains the fulfillment of what is written in part B, that Elijah experienced

¹¹David M. Howard, *Kitab-Kitab Sejarah*, 241.

Yahweh's promise. It says that every morning and evening the ravens brought him bread and meat, and he drank from the brook.¹²

In my opinion, this structure is not intentional on the part of the author of the narrative, but it is the fact that Yahweh is sovereign over the universe and all His creation and that is what the prophet Elijah experienced. The fact of such a structure will be found repeated until the end of the prophet Elijah's narrative that Yahweh fulfills the things He says.

The Old Testament book ends with the prophecy that Elijah will return "at the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord" (Mal 4:5); this prophecy was partially fulfilled when John the Baptist appeared (Mt 11:7-14; Lk 1:17) and will probably be fulfilled before the Lord Jesus Christ returns (cf. Mt 17:11; Rev 11:3-6).

This means that the patterns and structures presented in this section are not something to be taken lightly by God's people in all ages. Elijah's steadfast devotion to Jehovah and His covenant makes him a model of faith, courage, and loyalty to God in the midst of great opposition and persecution, as well as a model of faithful perseverance in opposing false religions and prophets.

As Yahweh's messenger, the prophet Elijah delivered a word of punishment from Yahweh for Israel's disobedience. Yahweh would withhold rain for three and a half years (cf. Deut 11:13-17). This word of punishment was also a mockery of Baal because the Baal worshippers believed that Baal was the master of the rain and was responsible for the abundant harvest.

III. Research Methodology

IV. Result And Discussion

There was a dramatic confrontation between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. The prophets of Baal were humiliated, for they had been unable to persuade Baal to put fire on the sacrifices on the altar, just as for the previous three years (v.1) they had been unable to bring their storm god to bring rain. The sense of humiliation is heightened by the fact that Baal was the Canaanite god of storms and rain: the Canaanite texts about this god extol his virtues above the powers that in 1 Kings. 18 so challenged him: "Baal will give rain in all seasons ... and he will call his thunder in the clouds to bring forth his lightning for the earth".

The historical context faced by the Israelites in 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; 18:45a with the situation faced by the Karo people in relation to the ritual of calling for rain is certainly a different contrast. However, there are important coherent elements that may connect the context of the two situations through the study of exegesis. Because one of the analytical knives of exegesis study or research is historical analysis (historical context), which contains cultural context or situation as well as literary elements.

One element of the connection between the two ideas is the need for rain to sustain human life. In this situation, Baal was believed by the Israelites to be the rain god and responsible for sustaining a bountiful harvest. After three years of drought, they desperately needed a storm. And Baal worship was socially accepted and supported by King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. While in Karo culture, *begu* (spirits of deceased humans) play an important role in the need for rain.

Based on all the results of the data analysis in the previous section, the materials will be presented and organized into a coherent discussion with a unitary format,¹³ i.e. the text is discussed relatively fluidly using the parts of the exegesis data analysis results presented below.

1. It Rains Only by the Word of YHWH

In this historical situation, the event of no rain occurred only and only by the word of YHWH.¹⁴ This is clear from the clause *klausa* *כִּי אִם־לִפִּי דְבָרִי* (*Kî 'im-lüpî dübäri*), but according to my word, 1 Kings 17:1). And the words addressed to king Ahab are a form of the prophet Elijah's service to the YHWH that appears through the clause *עֲמַדְתִּי לְפָנָיו* (*'äma'dTî lüpänäyw*, *before whom I stand*). The clause itself is strengthened by the definite particle preposition *ל* (*lū, to, for, towards, belonging to, in regard to, according to*) yang menunjuk jelas (definit) pada mulut (*לִפִּי*, *lüpî*) of the LORD Himself (speech, statement, declaration, command, promise). Not through other things or intermediaries, for example: intuition, ego, emotions, feelings, desires or needs of the prophet Elijah himself and or by other parties (the people of Israel, cf. 1 Kings 18:17-18; Gen 2:5; Ex 19:19; 1 Sam 12:18).

Then the rain also comes only and only by the word of the LORD which is written in the clause *וְאֶתְּנָה מָטָר* (*wü'eTTünâ mäṭār*, I will give rain) with the precedence of the coming of the word of the LORD in:

¹² Yusmaliani Goalangi, "Hamba TUHAN Yang Siap Menentang Jaman: Uraian Eksegesis 1 Raja-Raja 17:1-6" <https://jurnal.sttarrabona.ac.id/JurnalSTTA/index.php/JUAR/article/view/31/53>, 106-108. Cited 13 July 2023.

¹³ Douglas Stuart, *Eksegese Perjanjian Lama*, (Malang: Gandum Mas, 2013), 50.

¹⁴ Dalam pemenuhan Titah Ketiga Dekalog, dalam tulisan ini kata Tetragammaton 'YHWH' selanjutnya disebut TUHAN.

וַיִּבְרַח יְהוֹנָדָה הַכֹּהֵן (ûdübar-yhwh(’ädönäy) häyâ, the word of the LORD came, 1 Kings 18:1). In this situation, the LORD commanded the prophet Elijah (by the imperative qal tense לֵךְ, lëk, go!) to deliver the word (message) of the LORD to king Ahab.

This is not unique to the faith of the people or the religion of Israel, but it is the case when the rain does not fall and or when it does. In a number of texts listed in the biblical analysis, it has been mentioned that the situation crossed the literary and historical boundaries of the people of Israel. This means that in the texts the roar הַקּוֹל הַזֶּה (Kî-qôl hámôn haGGä°sem, thunder, 1 Kings 18:41) refers directly to the words that come out of the mouth of the LORD before the rain falls (Batak, *ronggur*, cf. Jn. 12:28-30, cf. 2Pet. 1:17, Mt.17:5; Mt. 9:7; Lk. 9:35).

Both occurred by the instruction of the LORD who spoke by His mouth (cf. Jn 15:26; 1Sam 12:18;). The consistency of the LORD's action of 'speaking' can be more easily understood by recalling the creation event: "God said: "Let there be light". And there was light", Gen. 1:3 also; "..... and to the showers and the downpours He said, 'Let there be showers'", Job. 37:6). Here it appears that it is the LORD who is pro-active in determining whether or not the rain falls. The rain does not fall, only by the word of the LORD. The rain fell, also only by the word of the LORD. Not by the initiative of the prophet Elijah in his capacity as a prophet of the LORD. This is emphasized by the conjunction particle כִּי (Kî, that, because, for, when) in 1 Kings 17:1 which confirms that the control of the rain is with the LORD alone and that it is communicated to the people of Israel only and only when the LORD himself speaks. The LORD is consistent with His will and His word. And His word must happen and be accomplished because the LORD is the Creator and Owner of the universe.

Just as Jehovah created the heavens and the earth by speaking, so does Jehovah speak for the performance of the system of the universe, including whether or not it rains. Thus it can be understood that the working system of the universe can work is by the word of Yahweh alone, not only by the activities of human worship and worship, especially if the address is addressed to those who are not the Creator or Owner of the universe (Baal, Asherah or spirits). The consistency of the word of the LORD to the prophet Elijah is the same as the consistency of the fire coming before the people and the king and the rain in the blink of an eye witnessed by the people.

Somewhat different from the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition, the rainfall is believed to be at the initiative of the *guru mbelin* or *guru sibaso* (shaman, Chapters 1.1. and 2.1.4.) through the suggestion of the people, elders and village officials who ask the shaman for guidance. Bringing offerings, the dukun then makes a request for rain to the spirits of the elders of the land (village gods), the spirits of the ancestors and the spirits of the dead asking for a suitable and appropriate day to perform the rain-calling ritual.

It was the LORD who conveyed His word through the prophet Elijah to cancel the rain and then there was the ritual of sacrificial offerings. It is not the other way around that the *ndilo wari udan* ritual must be preceded by offerings to the spirits of the elders of the land (village gods), the spirits of the ancestors and the spirits of the dead as part of the opening of the ritual. The practitioners and sympathizers involved in the ritual seem to still find it difficult to accept that the rainfall is at the word of God alone, that both are part of God's grace and or punishment as a form of God's providence over humans and the universe.

The prophet Elijah had to risk his life in the historical events throughout the two chapters (1 Kings 17 and 18) in proclaiming the name of the Creator and Owner of the universe, YHWH. He also had to hide in mountains and caves because of the work of proclaiming the Name by the death threats of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel.

2. Proclaiming the Name of the Creator and Owner of the Universe

The prophet Elijah had to risk his life in the historical events throughout the two chapters (1 Kings 17 and 18) in proclaiming the name of the Creator and Owner of the universe, YHWH. He also had to hide in mountains and caves because of the work of proclaiming the Name by the death threats of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel.

Note that Hebrew syntax does not recognize 'indefinite articles' such as : 'a book', 'a mountain'. All particle words must point to a clear object, for example 'this book', 'Horeb mountain'. That is why the name of the God of Israel is not indefinite or ambiguous, biased or something doubtful. This further strengthens the conclusion of the grammatical analysis, which clearly states that the word יְהוָה (yhwh(’ädönäy), 'the LORD' is a proper noun, meaning 'definite noun'. It refers clearly to the word mentioned or to the owner of the name.

From the lexical analysis, the word 'LORD' is the worship of the Israelites that was made known and revealed to the prophet Moses (Ex 3:14). The prophet Elijah also introduced the name of the LORD to King Ahab. At that time Ahab's trust in the LORD had died out and turned to Baal and Asherah. The seriousness of king Ahab's turning away from the LORD is seen in 1 Kings 16:30-33.

These words of Elijah mean that it was the LORD who was the address of Elijah's ministry. The reason for the prophet Elijah's courage to speak the word of the LORD against the abominable deeds of King Ahab and his family was because the LORD was alive. Elijah interacted (heard, spoke, lived with) the LORD

and experienced His power in his daily life. Elijah needed no compromise with Ahab. Even though he was rejected and his life was threatened he still delivered the prophecy of judgment from the LORD.

The Lord Jesus Christ also used the narrative of the prophet Elijah as a model in facing the rejection of the Jews, his own blood brothers and countrymen (Luke 4: 28-30) by saying: “Truly, truly, I say to you, no prophet is honored in his own place” (Lk 4:25; Mk 9:4). The prophet Elijah clearly knew that the motivation for all his words was for the sake of the LORD alone.

The prophet Elijah's phrase “as the LORD lives” is an expression that also contains political nuances against king Ahab. The prophet Elijah compared the living LORD with the gods worshiped by king Ahab. But it is the LORD who is powerful and sovereign over all His creation, as **Getz** points out¹⁵: “*He served the living God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And the made his motivation crystal clear to Ahab. “As the lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve ...” He proclaimed with this declaration Elijah was comparing he living God with Ahab’s gods of wood and stone*”.

From this expression, it can be understood that the LORD rules over the universe, not the dead gods worshiped by kings Ahab and Jezebel. According to Canaanite belief, Baal was the god of storms and controlled the rain. Baal ensured fertile agriculture and abundant harvests. Baal controlled thunder and fire. Baal also controlled life and death. He controlled the weather and the rain for the fertility of the land. But when the prophet Elijah declared the punishment there would be no rain and dew at the same time proving the ruler over fertility is the LORD not Baal. About this **House**¹⁶says: “*He makes it is his mission to teach that Yahweh lives, that Baal does not exist, and that ethical standard flow from a commitment to the living God*”.

The phrase *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ* (‘ēlohē yiSrā’ēl, God of Israel) uttered by the prophet Elijah was to emphasize the LORD's status as the God of Israel and to remind king Ahab of the covenant that the forefathers of Israel had made with the LORD at Mount Sinai. Specifically and repeatedly the prophet Elijah reminded King Ahab that the LORD was the God of the fathers of Israel, with the expression “the LORD God of Abraham” and later “the God of Isaac” and “the God of Jacob” (1 Kings 18:36; 2 Kings 13:23; cf. Matt 22:32; Mark 12:26; Luke 3:28). In Ex 3:15 the LORD Himself says: “... This is my name forever”. The LORD who has spoken will be God over Israel and they will be the people of the LORD. When the prophet Elijah revealed the name of the LORD, he was actually remembering the covenant. The prophet Elijah now faced King Ahab as an Israelite and said the LORD is the God of the fathers of Israel.

From the narrative, it can be seen that the Israelites committed a sin by deifying something other than God. Then the LORD was hurt and angry. Then the LORD punished the Israelites by not sending rain for three and a half years which made the rain not fall. After the punishment period was completed, the LORD sent rain. The three and a half years of suffering forced the Israelites and the king/queen to despair and come to a crossroads decision: the need for water or rain by worshipping the LORD or worshipping a non-God who regulates the availability of water or rain and who owns the universe. Thus the wheel of life runs again through the results of agricultural and livestock performance. It can be said that the event was a true battle about the name of worship (1 Kings 18:21,24) in the sense that it is not just its popularity, but the true identity of the Creator and Owner of the universe.

In the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition, it is unique that the *guru mbelin* or *guru sibaso* does not seem to announce (keep secret) the definite name or party or the identity of the worship of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition to the participants who determine whether or not rain falls in the Karo land area. *Guru mbelin* or *guru sibaso* does not seem to announce the certainty of the name or identity of the party who utters the word about the time of the ritual as well as the giver of rain or the determination of the time of rainfall. In this situation, it is clearly written that the prophet Elijah told God that He was the giver of rain and it happened by His word, including the time of the rainfall. If the *guru mbelin* or *guru sibaso* were to announce the name of the one who determines whether or not rain falls, then the ethnic Karo population in the Karo land area could independently (individually) call and worship that name when they need rain as the prophet Elijah had done (1 Kings 17:1; 18:1).

Based on a quiet lexical analysis of the word *יְהוָה*, (yhwh, Yahweh), the 'name' of a particular subject or object is closely related to the character and deeds of the bearer of the name. And regarding the word *יְהוָה*, (yhwh, Yahweh), believers can discover God's character from His deeds and works and from the descriptions of Him in Scripture rather than relying on the questionable etymology of His name. In this regard, in the narrative of the selected text, the prophet Elijah and the king Ahab are not only engaged in a hermeneutic battle about the name of God but also the practice of worshipping the LORD (Yahweh) or the worship of non-God (Baal, Asherah, etc.).

¹⁵ Akademisi pada Moody Bible Institute dan Dallas Theological Seminary, Gene A. Getz, *When The Pressure's On*, (USA: Regal Books, 1984), 14.

¹⁶Akademisi pada Beeson Divinity School dan ketua Evangelical Theological Society, Paul R. House, *The New American Commentary*, (USA: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1958), 212.

In relation to the above, if the worship of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition is true in the form of the spirits of the elders of the land (village gods), the spirits of the ancestors (ancestors) and the spirits of the dead then it is indicated that it has no small intersection with the command of the LORD as the Creator and Owner of the universe by the texts in the scriptures (Lev. 19:31; 20:6; 20:27 [rasuk]; 18:11 [asking for guidance]; 2 Kings. 21:6; 2 Chron. 33:60, cf. Jn. 8:44) that can provoke the LORD to anger.

3. Open Proof Prayer

This point is still close to the selected part of the text and the researcher considers it necessary to describe this part to get the important points of the dialog needed to answer the research problem.

The content of the prayer of King Ahab's prophets is rather unique. The names of Baal and Asherah are only mentioned in asking for an answer to the fire to burn their offerings. Not a single word of their prayers mentioned Baal and Asherah's titles as God or Allah. From morning to evening their prayers only read: "O Baal, answer us!" (1 Kings 18:26). Whereas the content of the prophet Elijah's prayer was: "O LORD, Lord of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that you are the Lord in the midst of Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that you are the Lord, O Lord, and that you have turned their hearts back" (1 Kings 18:36-37). In this case, the content of the prophet Elijah's prayer is concretely and explicitly written and mentioned that the LORD has the title, title or designation as God.

The prophet Elijah prayed a public prayer of vindication (1 Kings 18:36-37) in front of all the parties involved in the historical event, including: (1) the skeptics (all the people of Israel, 1 Kings 18:21), (2) the opponents (King Ahab and his false prophets, 1 Kings 18:17,19) and (3) the prophet Elijah himself (1 Kings 18:22) as the true prophet. As an ordinary human being (Jas 5:17; cf. Acts 14:5) in the historical event, the content of the words of prayer uttered by the prophet Elijah was nothing secret (mystical) and nothing magical. Even the Israelites who had never received higher education could easily train themselves to recite and repeat the words of this simple prayer. There is nothing to be secretive about with the mouth chattering, let alone with the atmosphere made magical in uttering the contents of prayer to the LORD.

This is one of the rather unique points of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition, which is preceded by visiting quiet places (sacred, cf. Luke 8: 29) and the content of prayers that are not socialized (taught) to practitioners and sympathizers of the ritual (cf. the Lord's Prayer [Matthew 6: 9-13] and the Jesus Prayer [John 17]). Or at the very least, the organizing committee of the ritual can make the book of worship procedures (guidebook) openly and transparently so that people from all walks of life can use it either individually or collectively and as a collection of reference materials about the ritual. Thus, lay people can also mention the name of the worshipper in the ritual individually to fulfill the need for rain as is commonly done in Sunday services in church.

The narrative situation is emphasized by the content of the prophet Elijah's prayer which he said publicly in front of all the people of Israel (1 Kings 18:21), king Ahab and queen Jezebel and their false prophets (1 Kings 18:17,19) in 1 Kings 18:38: "... at your word I have done all these things ...". The prophet Elijah himself suffered greatly for the sins of King Ahab, Queen Jezebel and all the people of Israel (1 Kings 18:18-19). The people and the prophet both suffered from the absence of water (rain). However, the prophet Elijah experienced greater suffering, namely: (1) the people of Israel (the king/queen and the people) were still continuing the practice of worshiping non-God (Baal and Ayera) and (2) the threat of assassination on the part of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel because of his responsibility to remind the king and the people of Israel of their sins. For the proclamation of the word of the LORD, the prophet Elijah had risked his own life. The event was motivated by the word of the LORD through prophet Elijah to Ahab about the absence of rain (1 Kings 17:1) for three and a half years which demanded proof that the LORD is the one who regulates the workings of the universe including the absence of rain.

If what is done by the practitioners and sympathizers of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition is in accordance with the word of the LORD then the *mbelin* teacher or *sibas* teacher can be said to be a servant of the LORD (cf. 1 Kings 17:24). However, if it is not true, then the practitioners and sympathizers of the ritual can be presumed that they have sinned and caused the LORD's heartache (cf. 1 Kings 16:2-4; 18:18).

It cannot be denied that as a cultural asset, the ritual is de facto and de jure protected by the Indonesian government. However, this situation can actually cause pros and cons among church congregations and cultural communities in the future and of course this does not need to cause disputes. It is enough that the situation is only limited to different opinions so that all parties are won in their respective beliefs.

4. The Declaration of The Proper Name in the Blink of an Eye

The LORD sovereignly decreed a drought for three and a half years. Apart from being a form of punishment to the Israelites (1 Kings 18:18), during this time the Israelites were also given the opportunity to

prove the potential of Baal and Asherah to provide or send rain. During this time, Baal and Asherah were unable to do anything. Even on the day of the public proof, Israel's strong attachment to Baal-Ashera was explicitly written: "But the people did not answer him a word" (1 Kings 18:21) by not responding or agreeing to the word of the LORD, doubting and disbelieving the LORD as the God of Israel, and the prophetic status of Elijah himself was no longer recognized and no longer accepted by the people of Israel.

Based on the analysis of lexical data in the narrative of the selected text, the prophet Elijah announced that the name of the Creator and Owner of the universe is the LORD. Telling the name of the Creator, saying a simple and short prayer was the task of the prophet Elijah openly before king Ahab and all the people of Israel. However, it was the LORD Himself who came to reveal, make His Name and Himself manifest before King Ahab, all his false prophets and all the people of Israel on Mount Carmel.

Not only that, through the prophet Elijah, the LORD reveals Himself as the Creator and Owner who has full and sovereign power over the universe by sending rain in the blink of an eye in the adverbial phrase עַד-כֹּה וְעַד-כֹּה ('ad-Kò wü'ad-Kò, in the mean while) in verse 45a which is reinforced by the verb יָהִי (yühi, to be, meaning rain), a qal imperfect verb which is a simple active action that will not be completed then, now or later. This indicates that the rain will not be finished then, now or later in the sense that it will still happen according to the will of the LORD as the Creator and Owner of the universe. The precise and majestic answer happened in the blink of an eye with the downpour of rain (1 Kings 18:45a). The suddenness of the rain in the blink of an eye was also preceded by the suddenness of the LORD's fire on Elijah's sacrifice and on Elijah's own open and direct prayer (1 Kings 18:36-38).

The fire (lightning) came in the twinkling of an eye (cf. Job 36:32). The tenses used in the text are similar: תִּפְּלוּ (TTiPPöl, to descend, qal imperfect verb, action that continues to occur, or is in progress, but not yet completed cf. Ex 19:16; 20:18; 24:17). The burnt offering, firewood, stones, earth and water of the trench around the altar were also consumed in the blink of an eye. The tense used here is similar in אָכַל (TTö'kal, eat, devour, qal imperfect verb). The event of the LORD's fire consuming the prophet Elijah's offering caused the people of Israel to fall down and cry out: "The LORD, he is the Lord! The LORD, he is the LORD!". There is no need for a pause or time lapse when the true LORD is truly present by His own will, by His own sovereignty; not by the will of man.

In the clause אֲשֶׁר עָמַדְתִּי (ášer `äma°dTî, before whom I stand), the tense is perfect with a qal stem. This indicates an event that happened in the past but the prophet Elijah just said it, which should be in the imperfect tense. However, the prophet Elijah wanted to say that he had been standing before the Lord for a long time, just as he was doing now. He wanted to emphasize that being on the Lord's side had happened in the past and would never waver "perfect completed active". The statement standing before the Lord is the same statement used for Abraham in Gen. 18:22; 19:27 and for Moses and Samuel in Deut. 4:10; Jer. 15:1. According to Allen, the word "stand before the LORD" explains: "*Servants of YAHWEH 'stand before Him' as an expression of dedication, allegiance and servitude. This terminology is used of priests (e.g. Ezk. 44:15) and particularly of genuine believers during the period of Israel's decline and apostasy*" (1Kgs. 17:1; 18:15; 2Kgs. 5:16).¹⁷

In the prophet Elijah's expression "standing before the LORD" means to reveal that it is the LORD whom he serves. This is why the LAI translates it "whom I serve". It is the LORD who is powerful and sovereign over all creation. The present and sovereign LORD brought judgment on king Ahab with no rain or dew for three years and six months. Pierson calls these words of the prophet Elijah an oath. It was a powerful statement; a reaffirmation of the covenant the LORD had given. From this he gained strength to face the king and his army because he was serving the LORD. And the authority of the LORD was present in him.

From the three characteristics of the LORD mentioned above, it shows that the prophet Elijah knew the LORD and experienced the LORD continuously (cf. Chapter 4.1.6., by structure A-A'; B-B') in his life. It was this knowledge and experience of the LORD that became the motivation and basis for his ministry. The LORD he served was the LORD of the covenant, the living LORD. The God who wanted to be the LORD of Israel, whom King Ahab should also continue to worship.

After the prophet Elijah mentioned the characteristics of the LORD, he mentioned the punishment that the LORD would give. Why was the type of punishment specified as no rain in the whole land? Obviously because they wanted to restore the Israelites' image of the LORD. That the one who has the power to withhold and send rain is the LORD, not Baal. Except by my word. These words show that at the time he spoke these words in divine authority. Prophet Elijah with the authority of the LORD told King Ahab. For it is the LORD who has the power to withhold rain from heaven.

In verse 2, the clause דְּבַר-יְהוָה (dübar-yhwh ('ädönäy), come the word of the LORD) appears to be repeated twice in the passage. This shows that the prophet Elijah acted always at the command of the LORD (by the structure A-A'; B-B'). This word, which is the theme of the whole chapter 17, is repeated six times

¹⁷R. Laird Harris, et.al. (eds.), "עָמַד", *Theological Wordbook of the OT*, (Chicago: Moody Publisher, 2003), 674.

(17:2; 17:5; 17:8; 17:14; 17:16; 17:24). This emphasizes that everything the prophet Elijah does in this chapter is based on the command of the LORD. The prophet of the LORD is God's intermediary with His people. Elijah acted not by his own will but by the command of the LORD. This shows that when God's prophet was ordered to leave the place where he prophesied, it was a sign that God could close His mouth, so that there would be no word from Him. This is what happened in Israel for three and a half years until the LORD Himself determined the time. So for 3 years and 6 months there was no word of the LORD in Israel until the LORD Himself commanded the prophet Elijah to return and show himself and speak His word (1 Kings 18:1).

Unlike the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition, the *mbelin* teacher or *sibaso* teacher is believed to receive information from the spirits about the day of the ritual, not about the day of the rain. It should also be noted that after the ritual is completed, it does not rain immediately. Sometimes it rains in the afternoon or not at all. And even if it does fall, the level of rainfall or volume tends to be only sparse and of short duration.

This situation is enough to encourage sympathizers and practitioners to pay close attention if there are lay congregations who suspect (perceive and perspective) that the *mbelin* teacher or *sibaso* teacher may first look at the weather forecast published by the relevant institution and then convey information about the time of the ritual. If this is the case, it can be suspected that these two things are the factors that cause polemics among the GKBP church congregation and also the Karo ethnic tradition groups against the GKBP church in connection with the implementation of the ritual.

5. Have Identification Proximity

Based on the analysis of historical data, it was found that the practice of worshiping the gods Baal and Asherah by King Ahab and Queen Jezebel and the people of Isarel contained elements that offended the LORD, namely the violation of the LORD's commandments. As the fertility god of Canaan, the practice of Baal worship entailed feasting to satisfy the lust for wine and moral transgression. Drunkenness and indulgence in sexual lust were obligatory in the religion of Baal. Sexual relations with devotional prostitutes (male and female) were believed to encourage Baal to enjoy sexual relations with his spouse, thus ensuring fertility for the whole country.

The researcher does not have the verses of the sexualized song *Tembut-tembut Seberaya*, which must be sung during the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition. While the song verses should not be sung carelessly and only specifically sung when the ritual event is held and should not be recorded or documented.

We also have no data on the relationship between the sexual overtones of the song's lyrics and the need for rain by practitioners and sympathizers present: whether it emphasizes the need for fertility (procreation or farming crops) which seems to be synonymous with fertility deities as contained in Baal and Asherah worship practices.

Researchers also do not have chronological-historical data on whether the ritual practices of Baal and Asherah worship are part of and or derivative of and or have a direct or indirect relationship with the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition. However, based on the above information, the researcher can propose the conclusion that both the ritual practice of *ndilo wari udan* of the Karo ethnic tradition and the ritual practice of Baal and Asherah worship rituals, both have elements that are somewhat identical or similar or somewhat close in identification.

Based on the literature sources that the researchers obtained, it can be assumed that the costumes (masks and clothing) and dance movements of *Tembut-tembut Seberaya* have almost no connection with the invocation of rain, because the costumes and dance movements tell the story of the grief of the royal family who experienced the death of a child, with a rather slow tempo. However, in certain parts, the tempo of the *Tembut-tembut Seberaya* song accelerates, so that the dance movements of the masked dancers look similar to doing a tiptoe dance as if in a trance, which can strengthen the assumption that in the media there are ancestor spirits (*begu jabu*, *lelulur* spirits) who help in the process of calling rain through the dance.

Before the dance attraction and the *Tembut-tembut Seberaya* song were performed, at the beginning of the ritual, the receiving mediator (receiver of spirits, trance) also played a very important role in providing information about the time of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition. This means that in the implementation of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition, it can be assumed that the trance event occurred twice. This reinforces the notion that the ritual seems to have a close identification with the practice of worshiping the god Baal, which shows the attraction of tiptoeing and trance (1 Kings 18:26,28).

Reflecting on the situation, it appears that the rural officials and customary elders also seem to "give support" to the proposal to establish the implementation of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition within certain limits. Whereas the address of the prayers and offerings of *guru mbelin* or *guru sibaso* have not been definitively addressed to God or to a non-God that is embraced by believers. In this situation, it

can be assumed that the rural authorities and traditional elders have supported the preservation of the culture politically.

As described, the god Baal had become a universal deity and was excessively nurtured by queen Jezebel so that the influence of Canaanite religion had long infiltrated through Israel's neighboring nations. Under Jezebel's influence, Canaanite religion and its practices had spread widely from within the palace. Jezebel's program in religion had gripped the religious heart of ancient Israel. Thus, and not impossibly, *de facto* Israel was considered to have come under Canaanite political co-optation. In connection with this, because the preservation of cultural products has now become a global issue and is included in the protection of the World Trade Organization (WTO, World Trade Organization), the GBKP church through its leaders should also be aware that the ritual elements of the *ndilo wari udan* ethnic Karo tradition can become a commodity as well as a means of gripping members of the GBKP church congregation through the political support of rural officials for the sake of cultural preservation ideals.

In relation to the narrative of the selected text about the people's need and request for rain to the LORD who created the universe, the LORD does not need the people to get drunk and have an orgy, does not need a mediator who goes into ecstasy and does not need trance-like attractions in the form of dancing on tiptoe and cutting themselves until they bleed as written in 1 Kings. 18:24,26. The people of the LORD are asked to take the commandments and words of the LORD seriously so that the LORD will arrange for the rain to fall in its season for the fertility and prosperity (Jer 5:24) of mankind.

6. Avoiding the LORD's Heartache

The king of Egypt, Pharaoh, at the time of Joseph was also not very enthusiastic about the LORD, the God of Israel (Gen 41:16). But later he was amazed at the wisdom the LORD gave Joseph in dealing with and overcoming the drought and famine. Pharaoh himself directly recognized the power of the LORD and gave the LORD the opportunity through Joseph to manage the harvest (Gen 41:38). Drought and famine are irresistible and unavoidable. The disaster still happened. However, by the wisdom of the LORD, through Joseph, Egypt was enabled to go through the difficult times and save the Egyptians from drought and lack of rain for seven years.

It is important for practitioners and sympathizers of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition to explore the historical events including the narrative of the selected text. Rather than violating the First, Second and Third Commandments of the Decalogue and incurring the headache of the LORD, they should find other solutions when it does not rain for a certain period of time, such as establishing water reservoirs, making situ (dams), water ropes, drilling wells or other similar things. Or respond to investigations that verify if the absence of rain is a sign that the jubilee year has begun.

V. Conclusions

Based on the study of 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; 18:45a, the following conclusions of this research are presented as well as suggestions for contextual dialogue points that can be used by the GBKP Church and sympathizers and practitioners of the *ndilo wari udan* ethnic Karo tradition, namely:

1. Practitioners and sympathizers involved in the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition still seem to find it difficult to accept that the rainfall is by the word of God alone, that both are part of God's grace and or punishment as a form of God's providence over humans and the universe.
2. The prophet Elijah told King Ahab the name of the LORD, that the LORD was the God of the fathers of the Israelites and reminded King Ahab of the covenant that the ancestors of Israel had made with the LORD. The event in the narrative is an essential battle over the name of worship (1 Kings 18:21,24). *Guru mbelin* or *guru sibaso* does not seem to reveal (keep secret) the name or identity of the party who spoke the word about the time of the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition or as the giver of rain or the determination of the time of rainfall.
3. Prophet Elijah said a public prayer of vindication (1 Kings 18:36-37) in front of all the parties involved in the historical event.
4. The LORD Himself came to reveal, making His Name and Himself manifest before King Ahab, all his false prophets and all the people of Israel on Mount Carmel. While in the *ndilo wari udan* ritual of the Karo ethnic tradition, the *mbelin* teacher or *sibaso* teacher is believed to receive information from the worship spirits about the day of the ritual (Chapter 1.1.); not about the day of the rain.
5. Both the Karo ritual practice of *ndilo wari udan* and the ritual practices of Baal and Asherah worship have elements that are somewhat identical or similar or somewhat close in identification (1 Kings 18:26,28).
6. Regarding the people's need and request for rain to the LORD who created the universe, the LORD does not need the people to get drunk and have an orgy, does not need a mediator who goes into ecstasy and does not need trance attractions in the form of dancing on tiptoe and cutting themselves until they bleed as written in 1 Kings. 18:24,26.

7. For the sake of preserving culture (cultural mandate), the GBKP congregation does not need to force itself to violate the commandments of the LORD (cf. Matthew 15:3,9; 23:32; 15:6; Mark 7:8,9,13) and does not need to become syncretic, Christian but still serve the spirits (cf. Isaiah 8:19; 7:11; Deuteronomy 18:11; 2 Kings 17:41; cf. Matthew 6:24, dyb.) which offends the LORD.

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