Sermon: **The Lord is God; the Lord alone is God** (1 Kings 18.39)

All have fears & phobias. Chief characteristic – they are hard to control. We try to control our environment eg storing water against a drought. Early humans reckoned gods must control what they could not.
Big question: how many gods, and what were they like, especially towards humans?

Canaanites were polytheists: eg Ilu (a waning chief), Yammu (sea), Baal (storms, fertility, associated with mountains). Baal was trying to be chief. Israelites in contact with Canaanites wavered with belief in YHWH. Hence our Elijah story – drought, Carmel contest, bringer of rain. YHWH is God of storms & all else! TEXT.

YHWH God (creator) of storms –Typhoon Meranti not created by God, but rules that govern weather are.

This should make us feel uncomfortable, even so. It is almost saying that storms are God’s fault.

There is another sense in which we might say that YHWH is God of storms

YHWH God of (=over) storms ie not overcome by them.

We look for God not in the *creation* of storms but in the *reaction* to storms. In Christchurch earthquake folk found God not in the shaking but in the activity of rescuers, in the tears of the bereaved.

This is surely also true in the storms we face daily. In illness, break-ups, death, despair, and/or when we need our faith rebuilding. Where do we find God? Not as a passive observer, but active participant.

Eg is Jesus on the cross, God doing something to show love, transforming life.

Hands up those who have found this to be true in their own experience? And in church life?

TEXT. In our society when the faith battleground is not polytheism v monotheism but theism v atheism TEXT is still true.