

ELIJAH

Lesson 1

I Kings 17:1,17-24, 18:41-46

ELIJAH'S PRAYERS

Israel had embarked upon one of its darkest hours with the reign of Ahab. Ahab had intensified the worship of Baal and angered God more than any king before him. His foreign wife, Jezebel, became extremely influential in the moral decline. She engineered a massacre of the prophets of God.

But there was one that she missed. He emerges with a determination to see his nation return to the worship of God. Elijah tapped into the power of prayer. He and God became a majority. James 5:17,18 gives us the background for his bold appearance before Ahab. He was human, encumbered with passions of despair, loneliness, and disappointment, but harnessed these feelings to pray a very disturbing prayer; "God, don't let it rain." It wasn't just a passing petition, but something he persisted with before God. Notice the manner and the determination of his praying. I Kings 17:20-22, 18:42,43. He prayed until he got an answer. With strong assurance in his soul, he boldly proclaimed the coming drought. He had power with God. That power would be brought to bear against the earthly powers of government and false religion.

Elijah's fascinating and powerful life was rooted in his private prayer life. He meant business with God, and God did business with him. Unprecedented miracles took place. The dead were raised, fire fell from heaven, and drought and rain came as the result of this man's utter confidence in the power of God. Let's follow after the man that follows after God. Miracles await us.

APPLICATION

Revival begins in the hearts of concerned individuals. We must be stirred to the point of strong intercessory prayer. Let us transform our sorrows and frustrations, by prayer, into prevailing faith. If it's big enough to worry about, it's big enough to pray about. Passionless prayers are pointless prayers. "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." James 5:16

"It is good to pray specific prayers. As we persist, our requests will be purified by the Spirit and conformed to the will of God. Romans 8:26,27 When we pray according to the will of God, then we can be assured that we will receive the things we desire of Him. I John 5:14,15 Persistence is the key to successful praying. Please note the teachings of Jesus in this matter. Luke 11:5-10 18:1-8

"It has been stated that Satan greatly fears the person that knows how to pray. Every saint has a battle to fight with evil. May we rise in the power of the Holy Spirit, through prayer and boldly face evil victoriously.

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Lesson 2

I Kings 18:20-40

ELIJAH'S CHALLENGE

After months and even years without rain, it became apparent to Ahab that Elijah's prediction was no fluke. He sent out search parties in every direction looking for the prophet. Elijah had him where he wanted him; in disparate need. Elijah had a God-given plan to propose to the subdued tyrant. "Let's put God and Baal in the ring together and see who really is sovereign." What could Ahab do but agree to the arrangement?

Three things stand out about Elijah at Mount Carmel; 1. He utterly distained the false god, Baal, and his prophets. 2. He was utterly confident in his God. 3. He knew that he was called of God. Elijah ridiculed the worship and the prophets of Baal. All day long he taunted them. He wanted Israel to see once and for all the futility of idol worship.

Then very deliberately, he built his altar and prepared his sacrifice. He used twelve stones, symbolic of God's design upon His people. He prepared the blood sacrifice according to the law of God. He again appealed to the plan of God by pouring twelve barrels of water on the sacrifice. It made it impossible for anyone but Jehovah to kindle fire on the altar.

His timing was also significant. It was time for the evening sacrifice, which most likely hadn't been offered to God for years. Elijah prayed a very simple prayer in which he appealed to his obedience to the voice of God, and the consuming fire of God fell. It was dramatic and frightening. There was only one conclusion to make. "THE LORD HE IS GOD, THE LORD HE IS GOD." Israel was without excuse. Elijah rose to the occasion and executed the false prophets of Baal. It was time for vengeance. Elijah made his boast in the Lord and he was not ashamed.

APPLICATION

"We are commanded to hate evil. That is the only hate that is godly. We do not hate the sinner, but we are to hate the sin that separates him from God and destroys his soul.

Strong confidence in God will vanquish fear of evil. If God is for us, who can be against us. For the sake of revival, Satan must be challenged at the altar of prayer. He must be exposed for who he is; a thief, a liar, a murderer and a false accuser. Through our prayer and manifestation of the Holy Spirit in our lives, unbelievers can be converted to the knowledge that 'Jesus is Lord.'

Observe spiritual protocol at the altar. Only then will you be protected from shame and defeat. We need a scriptural foundation for what we do. The name of Jesus must be invoked upon our prayers.

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Lesson 3

I Kings 17:2-16, 19:1-8

SPECIAL CARE FOR SPECIAL PEOPLE IN SPECIAL TIMES

Elijah's boldness to proclaim a drought, put him in danger and in want. But God supplied his needs so uniquely during this difficult time. Three different sources were utilized to secure Elijah's well being. First, nature itself provided gave the man of God its assistance. A brook of water and God trained ravens brought comfort to the man in exile. God had another plan whereby he would not only continue to provide for Elijah, but for so another obedient person who was in need.

Off to the land of Zarephath, Elijah went seeking the widow God had spoken to him about. She seemed so unlikely to be of any benefit to him. She was a Gentile and destitute. But she had an open heart to the God of Israel. She obeyed Elijah's 'unreasonable' request. Consequently a miracle rested upon the meager supply of flour and oil, and it was always there and enough. Elijah was able to share the benefit of serving God with the widow and her son. It wasn't steak and shrimp but it was still from the hand of God.

After the challenge and victory at Mt. Carmel, danger struck. Jezebel vowed to kill him. The revival which seemed so imminent evaporated before Elijah's eyes. He fled discouraged and depressed. Into the desert he went to hide and sulk. He prayed to die. While he rested from fatigue and discouragement, an angel prepared a meal for him, woke him and served him.. Where there was no natural supply, and where no human hand could reach him, God sent his angel. After two meals from the heavenly supply Elijah was so strengthen that he went on the strength of that food for forty days.

APPLICATION

"God has promised to deep his people in times of difficulty. Our dilemma is His opportunity to show His personal involvement in caring for us. Ps. 33:18,19 Phil. 4:19 A foundation of good works in prosperity will insure us with mercies in difficulty. I Tim. 6:17-19

"We suffer the afflictions of the world, but not without the comfort of the Holy Spirit. We are so blessed. There should be no self pity when we consider those who suffer even more than we do and have not the knowledge of Jesus as a personal savior and provider.

"There should always be enough to share. Let us learn from the widow. Don't forget to entertain strangers. Some have entertained angels.

Heb. 13:1

We can all testify of how God has provided for us by way of nature. A true child of God is in fellowship with God's creation. Many times God will use other people to minister to us. We need to acknowledge God's provisions given to us through them. If we then can be thankful for these, then in times of dark despair when neither nature or humans can minister to us, God will send his angel to give us strength from heaven. How lasting is a supernatural touch from God! We have been made partakers of heavenly manna that strengthens the soul. Jehovah Jireh reigns on the behalf of His own. Heb. 1:13,14 Ps. 20:1,2

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Lesson 4

I Kings 19:11-21

THE STILL SMALL VOICE

Elijah succumbed to discouragement after his expectations didn't materialize. It was no use to continue the battle against idolatry. He was the only one who cared, or so he thought. He even requested that he might die.

In that sullen moment, God took occasion to instruct and to encourage Elijah by broadening his scope of what was really going on. God used dynamics such as wind, earthquake, and fire to show Elijah that there was no answer in his wrath. It would not be by might or by power, but by His Spirit. God would raise up and anoint men to continue the battle against paganism. It was the still small voice that penetrated Elijah's soul. God chose to whisper encouragement and instruction to Elijah. One commentator likened it to a child's soft voice. It was time to draw close and listen intently. God gave him the scenerio of the future. He was commissioned to anoint three men, two kings and a prophet, that would bring vengeance on Ahab and Jezebel. Elijah's sense of loneliness diminished when God informed him the were seven thousand in Israel who had not compromised their allegiance to Him. God had a plan, and God had a people reserved to His purposes. From this newly acquired perspective, Elijah never again fell to the depths of despair. After being rejected and threatened, he was now the apple of a young man's eye who was determined to be a man of God as his master was. Elisha would serve him until the glory of God would separate them.

APPLICATION:

"How irrational we become when we get discouraged. Our view becomes distorted. We must discipline ourselves not to make decisions when we are discouraged. A discouraged person often becomes militant and demanding. They want action now. It is a by-product of pride. God is too wise to grant our rash requests. The wrath of man does not accomplish the work of God. James 1:20

"The best answers do not come with dramatic means, but it's the tender whisperings of the Spirit that stills the inward storm. Our arguments must be disarmed so that God's good will can be known. Job had to learn this. God wants us to draw close to Him so that we can see the Big Picture.

"Self pity brings loneliness. A child of God is never alone. We may be physically removed from people, but we are not alone. John 16:32 There is no trouble we are experiencing that others haven't struggle with also.. I Cor 10:13

"Nothing is as encouraging as meeting some zealous Christian brother or sister. God does have a people. May God grant to every senior Christian a spiritual apprentice that will appreciate their testimony and admire their walk with God. It's nice to know you made a difference in someone's life. Ps. 71:17,18

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LESSON 5

I Kings 21:17-26, II Kings 1:1-17

THE MANNER OF THE MAN

From first impressions you might have misjudged Elijah. He comes across so bold, rough and uncompromising that he is startling at first. Even his appearance was rough, hairy, and outdoorsy. He is known as the prophet of fire. He became the pattern for John the Baptist, who came in like manner and appearance. Matthew 3:4 Like Elijah, John was despised for his manner. He was accused of having a devil. Matthew 11:18,19. By the way, the worst accusation the devil can make is that someone is like him. But Elijah was a unique man designed for a people who needed what he was.

More often than not, society judges a person for being too extremely religious rather than looking at itself as being ungodly. Before we judge Elijah, we must consider wicked Ahab and Jezebel who were determined to corrupt the nation. He became a standard of righteousness to a nation marching into a certain doom. Without respect of persons, Elijah called sin what it was. The prophet appeared to Ahab in the ill-gotten vineyard of Naboth and delivered a sobering message of doom for Ahab and Jezebel. He struck fear and dread into the heart of this evil monarch. His prophecy upon them is now a matter of history. Vengeance belongs to God.

Again Elijah assumed the role of the unwanted prophet to their son, Ahaziah who reigned after their death. Doom and gloom was pronounced upon him for seeking council from Baal rather than from Jehovah who had shown Himself by fire. Elijah called upon that same fiery presence to devour those who came to apprehend him in the name of the King. Eventually he was given safe passage, and personally delivered the same uncompromising message. Stay with it, Elijah. We need more like you.

APPLICATION

"Learn not to be too quick to judge a man's ministry because of his manner. Listen to his message and observe his fruits. Paul suffered from the casual judgments of immature Corinthian believers. II Cor. 10:7-10 Many beautiful gifts may come by way of unattractive packages. Check for content, not for appearance.

"It will most likely fall our lot to be a Elijah to some wayward relative or friend who is blindly heading the wrong direction. Even when we our admonitions are unwanted, we must remain faithful to warn the unruly as God directs us. I Thess. 5:14

"Consider the protection God gives His people who love righteousness and hate evil. Luke 10:19 Jeremiah 1:17-19 Let's don't compromise God's truth for anyone. Amen.

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Lesson 6

II Kings 2:1-18

ELIJAH'S FINAL VICTORY

Who says everyone has to die? Elijah didn't. God used him as a symbol of rapture and immortality that He has promised to His people. His grand departure would bring an exclamation point to a life that was sold out to God. Victory would be Elijah's everlasting legacy. His faith brought victory in six areas; 1) Answered prayers. 2) Miracles. 3) His calling confirmed. 4) Vengeance upon his enemies. 5) A successor was anointed to carry on the work. 6) He didn't die.

The school of the prophets was evidently established by Samuel at various locations throughout Israel. There was an order in Ramah, Bethel, Gilgal, and Jericho. They studied the law, music and sacred poetry. They gave themselves to spiritual matters and were aware of the imminent departure of Elijah. The Spirit in them gave a consistent message to Elisha wherever he went. Although it seemed unappreciated by him, it seems to have intensified his determination to follow Elijah to the very end.

Elisha would not leave Elijah's side even when Elijah encouraged him to. The Jordan River had been an important boundary in Israel's history. They had crossed over under Joshua's command into the promise land of Canaan. Now it had special significance for both Elijah and Elisha. It was a crossing into the glory world for the former, and a new anointing for service for the latter. What Elisha saw would change him forever. Chariots and horses of fire descended from heaven and raptured Elijah away. Elisha must have shouted the words attributed to him at that time: "MY FATHER, MY FATHER. THE CHARIOTS OF ISRAEL AND THE HORSEMAN THEREOF." With enthusiasm he picked up the mantle of the departed prophet and entered into a life of even greater dynamics of the Spirit. The torch of victory had been passed on.

APPLICATION

"Our Prophet and forerunner, Jesus Christ, has gone before us into heaven. Blessed are those who follow Him in His death, burial, and resurrection. Romans 6:3-6 Let us not turn aside. We are and shall be partakers of His ascension and glorification. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the result of the glorification of Jesus. John 7:37-39. Our rapture and immortality are imminent because He lives in Glory. I John 3:2

"Let us not be lax about our life before God. There is an anointing to be sought after that is not cheap. II Peter 1:5-11

"God has promised to rapture the church with great glory. We have not been given reason to doubt or fear concerning our fate. Jesus is the firstfruit of the dead. In other words, he is the prototype of what is going to happen to the church living and dead.

When Christ comes the living will be able to say, "Oh death, where is your sting." The dead will say, "Oh grave, where is your victory." WHAT A GLORIOUS DAY THAT WILL BE! Romans 8:11, 13:11, I Corinthians 15:51-58, I Thessalonian 4: 13-18

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Lesson 7

I Kings 19:10,14 II Kings 2:9,13-15, 13:20,21

Matthew 11:4, 17:1-6, 10-13

THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH

Having escaped the grasp of death, Elijah entered into a pre-rapture, pre-resurrection immortality. Nether would his influence be subject to death. His presence would haunt the powers of darkness for time indefinite. His prophetic spirit would be embodied again and again. The first recipient would be his servant, Elisha, would requested that a double portion of Elijah's spirit be poured out upon him. It can be observed in scripture that Elisha not only confronted evil in a dramatic way, but he performed twice the number of recorded miracles as Elijah. Jesus attested to the fact that the spirit of Elijah was upon John the Baptist. Though John performed no miracle, he had the awesome task of preparing a people to receive their Messiah. He preached repentance fearlessly. The same zeal for God that was upon Elijah was upon John. He cared to the death. The spirit of Elijah is not just the performing of miracles, but a revival of righteous living before God.

Before Jesus went to the cross he spent a glorious moment in the presence of two great men who had passed out of this world into the glory world; Moses and Elijah.

What comfort and preparation this must have given him.

The spirit of Elijah is a type of the Holy Spirit. Yet greater still the Holy Spirit of the One who overcame death, rather than the spirit of one who simply escaped its grasp. Jesus stated that greater works would be done by his ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit than those done in His ministry. John 14:12 By this anointing the church will triumph over the flesh, the world, and the Devil. How we like Elisha, Elijah's servant, should cry out mightily, "GIVE ME A DOUBLE PORTION OF YOUR SPIRIT."

APPLICATION

Do I passionately pray for a revival?

Do I have a fear of people that hinders my testimony?

Have I sought after and received the Holy Spirit?

Do I commune with the Holy Spirit?

Do I believe for the greater works that Jesus described?

Do I truly expect to be caught away, bodily, to be with Jesus forever?