

Elijah: A Man Sent from God

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[0 : 00] Are you going to help? 1 Kings chapter 17.

1 Kings 17. No instruments.

But they had some absolutely amazing singers in that armification. And you could almost hear the music in just the voices. And it was just absolutely beautiful.

When you get voices blending and doing the harmonies and things. Yeah, it's just. Yep. It's gorgeous. 1 Kings 17.

What I decided to do for the next few weeks. Is I like Bible characters. I like looking at them and learning about their walk with the Lord. And how they did things.

[1 : 07] I did that kind of for a couple weeks there with Gideon. So tonight we're going to look at one in 1 Kings 17. Bibles are filled with accounts of men who seemed larger than life.

When you go through and you look at people like Gideon. Or people like Moses and David and Daniel and Paul and others like that. They seem to be characters who are far above anything we see today.

Or anything that we are. But you know. I'm going to let you in on a little secret. They were human. They were people. Just like us.

There's no difference. To a Paul or a Moses. They were people. The difference being. Their obedience to the Lord. And what he was doing.

And. We're going to talk about. Elijah. And Elijah. Again. James. 517 says. He was a man subject to like passions as we are.

[2 : 12] He was just like us. That's hard to fathom. Isn't it? When you think about Elijah. What's the first thing that comes to your mind? Mount Carmel.

Fire coming down. Against those prophets of Baal. Wow. That's amazing. He was a guy just like us.

Except. He believed God. And obeyed him. And everything that he said. So I'm going to begin a little series here. About.

Elijah. Elijah. He was a man sent from God. And our goal is to see the fact that. You know. If we could be totally yielded to God. And to his will.

The way. These men. Were. What could we accomplish. For him. Look with me at verse one. We're just going to do verse one tonight. And it says. And Elijah the Tishbite.

[3 : 08] Who was of the inhabitants of Gilead. Said unto Ahab. As the Lord God of Israel liveth. Before whom I stand. There shall not be dew. Nor rain.

These years. But according to my word. Let's have a word prayer. Father. I just thank you for this time. To look at your word tonight Lord. I thank you for a time to.

To study. Elijah. Elijah. And what he did. And Lord. How he did it. By obeying you. And how you rewarded him. And you took care of him.

And you met his needs. And you used him. Because he was willing to obey. Lord. I pray that you would just minister. To our hearts tonight. As we begin talking about Elijah.

And Lord. May we be inspired to. Obey you. In everything that you ask us to do. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen. I want you to see first of all. Elijah.

[4 : 02] As I just said. Kind of. He was a common man. He was a common man. And I want you to see some things. About his home. He was. He was. From a place called.

Tishbi. Or Tishbay. It was part of Gilead. He's a Tishbite. And he's part of Gilead. It says. Gilead was a rough. Rugged.

Mountainous. Area. With lots of high peaks. And lots of deep valleys. Matter of fact. The name Gilead. Actually. From the Hebrew. Means. Raw. Or rugged.

So what's it telling us? It's telling us Elijah. Elijah. Was a backwards guy. Nothing special about his education. Nothing special about. You know. His learning.

And his culture. And he's a backwards type of guy. But when he steps onto the scene. And begins his ministry. His methods. His message.

[4 : 58] His mannerisms. Everything about him. Was a rough and rugged guy. Today. We would call him a redneck. That would be what he would. He'd be known as probably.

Because. He had that kind of a background. And even in his dress. You don't turn there. But in 2nd Kings. Chapter 1. Verse 8. It says. And they answered him.

And said. Let me give you background. Before I read the rest of that. The king had sent messengers. The king had sent messengers. To go and take. Word to.

A priest. Of Baal. About. Things that were going to happen. And stuff. Along the way. They meet. Elijah. Elijah turns them back around. And says. You go back. And tell the king.

He's going to lose. And he's going to die. And they. And the king said. Who was it that told you this? And they answered him.

[5 : 53] He was a hairy man. And girt. With a girdle of leather. About his loins. And he said. It is Elijah the Tishbite. He knew exactly. Who it was.

Who had given that message. To him. And he's that rough and tumble. Type guy. You remember. When they talked about. John the Baptist. In the New Testament. He's out there.

In the wilderness. And they describe him. You know. And they. He sounds a lot. Like Elijah. So he's a. He's a rough and tumble. Type guy.

Not a lot of education. Not a lot. Just a very straightforward. This is what God said. This is what we're going to do. And that's the way it is. That's a good way to be. Notice this humanity.

When you look at him. Again in the book of James. James says this about him. Elias was a man. Subject unto like passions. As we are. And he prayed earnestly. That it might not rain.

[6 : 47] And it rained not. On the earth. By a space of three years. And six months. And he prayed again. And heaven gave rain. And the earth brought forth. And he prayed again.

And he prayed again. That it was their fruit. You know. If you follow the life of Elijah. And look at things. He's clearly a mortal man. Just like the rest of us. He's just.

And probably he was even more extreme. In some ways than the rest of us. Because of the background. Because of where he came from. He had a fiery temper. He was prone to bouts of depression. As you read through the story about Elijah.

He suffered from loneliness because of the position that he had and the things that he did. He had his issues. He had his problems. But he learned to obey God.

You know, what am I trying to point out? God is not looking for spiritual giants. God will make you a spiritual giant, but he's not looking for spiritual giants.

[7 : 48] He's looking for ordinary people who will be obedient to his word people who will follow him anywhere. There's nothing special about Elijah until he steps on the scene and does what God asked him to do.

And when he does what God asked him to do, I want you to notice one of the first things he did. He goes and walks straight into the king. He didn't wait for an invitation. He didn't wait for anybody to say anything.

He didn't wait for the guards to give him permission or anything. He just, and he went. You know, God doesn't need you to be rich. He doesn't need you to be well-educated. He doesn't need you to be beautiful.

He doesn't need you to be a shaker, a mover and shaker of this world and stuff. He just needs to be someone who will obey. Remember when Samuel went to Jesse's house because God said he was going to have a new king come from Jesse's house, one who was going to replace Saul.

And you remember the very first one who came out was the oldest son, Eliab. And Eliab walks out and Samuel's like, that's the guy right there, tall, good-looking.

[9 : 02] Ooh, this is the guy. People will follow this guy. And you remember what God said in 1 Samuel 16, 7? The Lord said unto Samuel, look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature because I have refused him.

For the Lord seeth not as man seeth. For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. He says, I want someone whose heart is with me.

I want someone who's willing to obey. I want someone who's willing to follow. I want someone whose heart is knit with mine. Remember David? What did they wind up calling him?

The man after God's own heart. Yeah. So think about others. Isaiah. Isaiah says, I saw the Lord high and lifted up.

And God said, I'm looking for somebody. And what was Isaiah's response? Here am I. Send me. Willing to obey, willing to do what God wanted him to do.

[10 : 02] In 1 Samuel, Samuel's talking about Saul. And it says in 15, 22, And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord?

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams. Someone who will obey and listen to me. That's what I'm looking for.

So Elijah was a common man. Just like us. Maybe even not as well educated or as good looking as us. Especially not me. You know, probably just an average guy.

But, he was willing to obey. A common man who was willing to obey. Second thing. He was a courageous man. He was a courageous man. Who defied a foolish ruler.

Another. Ahab was the worst king Israel ever had. No ifs, ands, or buts about it.

[11 : 10] He was the worst. He was the most wicked who ever sat on the throne. You're there in 1 Kings. Go back to chapter 16. Look at verse 30. And Ahab, the son of Omri, did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.

He was worse than anybody who had been on the throne before him. Look at verse 33. And Ahab made a grove. And Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

I read that as, he made a, he was so bad, he made God angrier than you take all the other kings and the wickedness that they did before him, and he was worse than all of them put together.

Wow. And you add to that the fact that he married Jezebel. Jezebel was the daughter of the king of Zidon.

And that was an offense to God too. 1 Kings 16, look at verse 31. And it came to pass as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.

[12 : 23] And he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ephbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him.

He not only was the worst king, he led them down a path away from God so that they would go to serving Baal. You know, you notice there it says he walked in the sins of Jeroboam.

You go through the Bible, you'll find that term about 20 times. I've been thinking about a message on the sins of Jeroboam, why he was so bad and how people were misled.

The sins of Jeroboam affected Israel for like 250 years. Think about that. One man's sins affected people for 250 years.

And here's Ahab, he's one of them. Jezebel, go back to her, she's from a group of people, they worshipped Baal, they were arden about it, and she along with Ahab introduced Baal worship to the people of Israel.

[13 : 36] Look at verse 32 there in 16. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. Not only did he turn people to worship Baal, he built an altar.

He built a place for them to worship. He built a house of worship for Baal. Here he is, God's country, God's people, and he's raising up the temple to Baal.

And people, because of that, lost all regard for God and what he had said. They did not obey, they did not follow what God said.

Matter of fact, look at verse 34. Verse 34 says, In his days did Hael, the Bethelite, build Jericho.

He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram, his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son, Segev, according to the word of God, which he spake by Joshua, the son of Nun.

[14 : 45] You look at that and you're going, yeah, what does that mean? What's the big deal there? A guy built up Jericho, his firstborn had part of it, his youngest son had part of it, what's the big deal?

Well, that was in direct disobedience to what God had said to Joshua. Joshua chapter 6, verse 26, And Joshua abjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city, Jericho.

He shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and his youngest son shall he set up the gates thereof. What does all that mean? The minute he laid the foundation for Jericho, his oldest son died.

The minute he put the gates up, his youngest son died. He sacrificed his sons for the notoriety of building Jericho up again.

God had said, don't do that. Don't go that direction. Don't allow Jericho to be rebuilt. They did it under Ahab. So here's a king that God sends Elijah to.

[16 : 02] The worst king, the most sinful king, a Baal worshiper, all of these different things that Ahab did, and Elijah walks straight in to the king's quarters and tells him what God's message is and he does it without flinching.

Think about that for a second. Willing to obey God. You know, most kings, you know the history of most kings. You walk in and stuff and they don't want you there, take him out and kill him.

Take his head off. Whatever. He walks straight in and says, okay king, here's what's going to happen. My mind works strangely because he said, it's not going to rain again until I say so.

Well, you arrogant little thing, you. But, he says, I'm bringing a message from the Lord and it's not going to happen until I say so. Suppose Ahab had reacted and said, take him out and kill him.

My mind goes, when would it have rained again there, I wonder. Because he says, it's not going to rain again until I say so. It's hard for him to say so if he's dead.

[17 : 17] He had Ahab worried. It took courage to go in and do that. It took courage to go in and walk in there and say to the king, you know what?

You're doing wrong and God's not happy with you and this is what's going to happen. There was a man by the name of Chuck Micklehaney. He was a pastor in the San Francisco area for over 20 years and he stood up for the things of the Lord there in the San Francisco area and one day he was sitting and reading the newspaper and he saw that there was going to be a meeting of the council the next day and so he decided to go to the city council meeting.

He knew what was on the agenda and he decided to go and hear what was going to happen. The homosexual rights issue was going to be part of the agenda. You know San Francisco and what it's like there.

So he went and he just sat there and he just listened and when they were all done talking he didn't have any placards with him. He didn't stand up and shout or anything but they asked if anybody had any comments to make and nobody moved.

Finally he said I do. And so he got up and they said so what would you like to say? He said well I'm I'm not going to say anything for myself but he says but I have three individuals I've respected for years and I'm going to let them speak for me.

[18 : 48] And he got up and he read Moses in Leviticus. He read one of the Psalms of David and he read Romans 1 from Paul.

He didn't preach he didn't scream he didn't do anything he just read the scriptures and then he sat down. And he said wait wait wait before you sit down who are those people?

Moses and David and Paul. One person said you're reading from the Bible aren't you? He said yes I am. One of the council members said I vote no. Another one said I vote no.

Another one said I vote no. It did not pass. And all he did was stand up and read scripture. Didn't sermonize on it didn't add anything to it just read what the scriptures said.

You know where are we headed in the United States of America today? Where are we going? You know when Elijah was caught up in the chariot and went to heaven?

[19 : 54] Elisha was left behind. And if you remember Elisha had Elijah's mantle his cloak and he went to the river and he hit the river and he said where is the God of Elijah?

And watch the river separate so he could go through. Let me ask you this today. Where are the Elijah's of the Lord God?

people who will say you know what? I'm just going to stand for God. I'm just going to obey what he says. I'm just going to do what he says. That's what we need to be doing.

And like this one man we don't have to make a big deal out of it. We don't have to do a lot of things. Just stand and say this is what God's word says and I'm going to stand on that.

Think about that. We'll talk some more about Elijah next week. Okay? Can somebody get me a prayer sheet? I stood in