

Prophets Work is Never Done Part 2

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Preacher: Pastor Steve Hersey

[0 : 0 0] 1 Kings chapter 18, 1 Kings chapter 18 once more, 1 Kings chapter 18, looking at verse 41, verse 41, down through the end of the chapter, it says in Elijah, 1 Kings 18, verse 41, Elijah said unto Ahab, get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

So Ahab went up to eat and to drink, and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, go up now, look toward the sea.

And he went up and looked and said, there is nothing. And he said, go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time that he said, behold, there rises a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand.

And he said, go up, say unto Ahab, prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the meanwhile that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was great rain.

And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was upon Elijah, and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

[1 : 3 1] Let's have a word of prayer. Father, thank you for this passage of scripture. The things have taken place on top of Mount Carmel. The prophets of Baal have been done away with.

And now it's time for the rain to come again. After three and a half years, it's time for it to rain again. And we look at Elijah, and we look at how he trusts you, how he has confidence in your word and your promises and things.

And Lord, I just thank you for the example we have. And Elijah was just an ordinary man like we are. We can trust you with everything in our lives. And Lord, we just thank you for the way you take care of us.

Lord, meet our needs, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. So last week we were talking about the fact that here's Elijah. He has gone through all kinds of things to see God at work.

He has seen God do so many different things. And now here he is. The things have taken place on Mount Carmel. Those prophets of Baal have done away with.

[2 : 3 9] He says, ah, now I can sit back and relax and take it easy. No. That was not what he was going to do. The job was not done yet. And so he's not going to sit back and take it easy.

He's going to make sure that everything is complete and everything is done that he was concerned about. So, you know, he wanted to see God do everything that he had promised to do.

And the rain had not come yet. And so he's waiting for the rain to come. He knows it's coming because you notice what it said there in verse 41? It says, there's a sound of the abundance of rain.

He was hearing things nobody else was hearing. He was prepared for things that nobody else was prepared for necessarily. But he's ready for God to do a great thing. And we talked about last week, first of all, that Elijah was a promise claimer.

He claimed the promises of God that God had given to him. And we talked about how many times we have to wait and see things before we believe. But there are those who will trust God without ever seeing God do anything yet.

[3 : 47] But they claim the promises that God has given to them. Elijah is one of them. We talked about, remember Thomas? I've seen the holes in his hands.

I've seen the holes in his side. And Jesus said, and what about those who haven't seen and believe? God loves those who will claim his word and whatever it says and be challenged by it.

Know that God is going to keep his promises to them. We talked about there's different types of promises. We talked about Mark chapter 16, verse 18.

It says, they took up serpents and they drank any deadly thing. It shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall be. We talked about that was for a specific group of people at a specific time.

It's not for all of us. We talked about Joshua when he told them, go march around Jericho. That was for a specific thing. But there are other promises that do apply to all of us.

[4 : 48] There is a chorus I used to love until I got thinking about it one day. It's in our book. I can't remember what number, but it's called, yeah, it's called that.

Hang on a second. Now I got to look. Be this my joy today is the name of the chorus. And it goes, be this my joy today to hear and to obey my Savior's word, his wonderful word.

To read in every line God's will and make it mine. Be this my joy, my wonderful joy. Great little chorus except for that one line. To read in every line God's will and make it mine.

Not all of them are for me. Some of them are for others. Some of them for different times. So we looked at that, the fact that we got to be careful what we claim for the promises of God.

But there are many in there that are for everyone. And Elijah had promises. And Elijah, as a promise claimer, claimed thanks based on the precious word of God.

[5 : 56] Again, in chapter 18, verse 1 there. He says, look at verse 1. It said, And it came to pass after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab, and I will sin reign upon the earth.

So he went, he showed himself to Ahab. He had that victory on top of Mount Carmel. He knew the rain was going to come. He trusted God's word.

And God had said, it's going to happen. And Elijah's like, okay. So he's trusting God's word and what God had said. He also trusted in God's perfect will. God's perfect will.

Remember back in chapter 17, verse 1. And Elijah the Tishbite, 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.

He knew what God's word was. He knew what God's will was. And it was for the nation of Israel to turn back to God. And so therefore, he says, I know what God's will is.

[7 : 07] And God's going to take care of everything that we need. God will supply when it's his time. And it wasn't his time while they were going against God and going their own direction.

Which brings us to a third thing, which is where we left off last week. The third thing was, he was a promised claimer based on the prior work of God.

The prior work of God. You know, he knew that he could trust God. Again, going back to look at Elijah's life. He had witnessed God's faithfulness time and time and time again.

At the Brook Cherith, ravens, who should have been eating all that food. He was bringing him food. He goes to the lady's house in Zarephath.

And he watches as a barrel of meal and a cruise of oil never go empty. There are always food there for them. He watches as there's a boy, the lady's son, dies.

[8 : 15] And he's able to pray and God brings him back to life. He watches as he puts a bull on an altar and prays a 63-word prayer. And fire comes down and consumes it all.

And he sees the victory over Baal, those prophets of Baal. He knows God is going to do his work and take care of them. You know, we don't think about this very often probably.

But there are verses in the Bible that should really trigger our minds. When we look at our day and age, when we look at these things that happened like to Elijah, God says in Malachi 6.3 that he is God.

I mean 3.6, sorry. Malachi 3.6. He says, look, I am God. I change not. He is the same.

Hebrews 13.8. He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. Our God is not going to change. Therefore, the same power that Elijah and Elisha and all those other prophets had is available to us today.

[9 : 28] God is still in the business of changing lives. God is still in the business of helping people to grow in their faith.

He is still in the business of helping us in everything that takes place. We tend to forget, even though throughout the Bible, God has given us instance after instance after instance.

Noah, for 120 years, God was with him every day, helping him as he built that ark, getting it ready for what God had told him was going to happen.

So what was Noah's reason for doing it? Same as Elijah. He believed the word of God. He believed the will of God. He had seen God work in different ways. How about the three Hebrew children?

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He said, no, walk into a fire, walking around in the fire. And then Nebuchadnezzar looks in there and says, wait a minute, there's a fourth.

[10 : 31] That looks like the Son of God. He's in there walking with them, keeping them, helping them, watching over them. How about Daniel and the lion's den? And then we think those are people we look at.

Think of other instances. Here's all of Israel coming out of Egypt. Pharaoh changes his mind. He's coming after them. They've got the Red Sea in front of them. Pew!

That Red Sea opens up. And they walk through on dry land. You know, I never really thought that much about that until recently. The sea opened up and they went through.

Yeah. They're going through on dry land. Think about that. And then, you know, you've got, he supplied them with manna when they needed food.

He gave them water out of rock when they needed it. How about the fact that Jesus, there's an empty tomb where Jesus was. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

[11 : 33] If he could do it then, he can do things now. When we go to prayer in a little while, God can do the things that we ask him for. He can meet the needs. You know, Luke 1.37.

What's going on? With God, all things are possible. God can do anything.

So he is a promise claimer, Elijah is, and we should be too, just like him. Again, ordinary man, just like us, but claimed the promises of God. Do we claim the promises that God's word has for us?

How about the fact that Elijah was a prayer warrior, a prayer warrior? In these verses, you see some major differences between Elijah and Ahab and their reaction to everything that had just taken place.

You know, they've been on top of Mount Carmel. They've had the fire come down and consume the offering that was given there. The prophets of Baal are now done and gone away with.

[12 : 42] And what is Elijah's focus that night? Versus Ahab's focus that night. You look at Elijah, and it says there that he went up and he put his face between his knees.

He was down praying. What was Ahab doing? Verse 42, Ahab went up to eat and to drink. So first of all, look at the fact that Ahab went to a feast.

He went to a feast. As soon as God had manifested his power and taken that offering and burned up the bull and the altar and the rocks and the dust and the water that was around them, just obliterated that altar.

After he had done that and the people saw it, the people repented. The people changed. They went back to the fact that God, how they word it, he is, God is the God.

God is the God. God is the God. What was Ahab's reaction? I'm hungry. Let's go have something to eat. I've seen all this, but you see, he's seen it all.

[14 : 12] He's heard it all. But there's no conviction. There's no change. These prophets of Baal and others, the ones that are Asheroth, remember there were 400 others that didn't show up that day.

They had been eating at Jezebel's table. They had been feeding them, taking care of them. They knew them and talked to them. And they're all dead now. And Ahab's like, oh well.

No big deal. There's no sign. The people said, the Lord, he is God. It doesn't say Ahab said that.

No sign of repentance. No sign of the fact that I have sinned and done things wrong. No sign of all of that. The only thing Ahab cares about is Ahab.

And I want you to see a few things about Ahab. I was talking about him. How weak is this man? If you read through this passage again sometime at home, kind of follow along and watch.

[15 : 18] Whenever Elijah is in the same room with Ahab, Ahab takes a back seat to Elijah. He's the king. But he listens to whatever Elijah says and does whatever Elijah says.

Why is he so weak in the presence of Elijah? Elijah. Because he's totally controlled by the flesh. Elijah is totally controlled by God.

He doesn't have any strength in his own flesh. He doesn't have any strength in the way he's living. You know, people who live in their flesh, they talk big and they act like they're strong and stuff.

But they're really not. He's also afraid of his wife. He's also afraid of his wife, yes. He was afraid of Jezebel, too. Yes, he was. So, good point. Strong man is one who rules his passions.

A weak man is one who's ruled by his passions. And that would be Ahab. He was ruled by Jezebel. He was ruled by the fact, hey, I'm hungry. I want something to eat and drink and stuff.

[16 : 24] All of those things became more important than what God wanted. Second thing, Ahab's focus was, it shows the condition of his heart.

He really didn't care anything about God. He just walks off to feed his flesh. And again, doesn't have any, no repentance or anything. He doesn't care about all that stuff.

It means really nothing to him. There's a lot of people in churches today. They're the same way.

They don't really care. The message is being given. Their minds are a thousand miles away. They're off somewhere else. What God's word is saying doesn't really matter to them.

And you watch them, their hearts, after the service, after the word of God is preached. And there's really no change.

[17 : 27] There's really no grasping what God's word says or what it has for us. You know, they kind of rush off and just go find other things that make them excited.

God's word is not something that's a big deal to them. All kinds of people in churches today like that. You know, I like one person said, Your attention span for spiritual things is your barometer for your spiritual growth.

Your attention span for spiritual things is a barometer of your spiritual growth. And what makes it interesting is there are people that, you know, if I preach 30, 35, 40 minutes, is he ever going to get done?

Why is he talking so long? Why is he... But set them in front of a game of some kind? I was thinking about this.

I have friends who love NASCAR. And I'm thinking, okay, Indianapolis 500. Two and a half hours of watching cars go around and around and around and around and around.

[18 : 44] And they find that more exciting than hearing God's word. Two and a half hours of doing it. Hoping for an accident or something somewhere in there to make it exciting.

Oh, look at that. Wow, that was a big crash. But otherwise, this is going around and around and around. You know, what we get so wrapped up in and so excited about should be the things of the word of God and God himself.

But so many today just know that's not a big deal. That's not something that's really all that important to us. You know, they can't seem to see from the word of God either, just like Ahab, that there's something wrong in my life that I may need to fix.

There's something in my life that I may need to address so that I can have the walk with God that I want to. Ahab didn't see that at all. God has just performed a tremendous miracle.

And Ahab's like, I'm hungry. Let's get something to eat. So often, we don't see the things that God puts right in front of us.

[19 : 56] Matthew chapter 7, verses 3 through 5. You know about this. We've been having some work done on our garage.

I had Howard over doing some stuff. As he was working on things, we had a hole in the bottom of our garage wall.

And the final kicker was, Bonnie opened the door one day, and there was a chipmunk in the garage. And when she opened the door, he took off like a flash and went toward that wall and jumped, and he went through the hole in the wall.

It's like, he's done this more than once. He knows all about that hole there. So we had Howard checking it out. And he did, and he pulled some stuff off to check it out. We had a sill.

More than half of it was rotted. So we had to replace the sill. So Howard's, you know, jacking up things on the side there and trying to get it up enough so he can get that sill out, put a new sill in.

[21 : 18] And then he brings a sill that's, you know. Four by four and 12 feet long. Yeah. Yeah. Four by four and 12 feet long.

And we kept referring to it as the beam. He says here, you've got a beam in your own eye, but you can't. You're concerned about the mote, the little thing that's in somebody else's eye.

You've got this beam. He says, be so careful. And that's the way we are so often. We get so wrapped up in other people.

We're quick to go, that was a great message you preached. I was listening to that message you preached, and I wish so-and-so would have heard it. I wonder if they were paying attention.

Too bad they're not here today so they could hear that. No, it's for us. God has it for us. And so we need to be so very careful. Do we act like Ahab sometimes?

[22 : 16] We're so excited about things for other people, but it doesn't really apply to me. Ahab's the king. It really doesn't apply to him. You know, we need to be so very careful.

Next week, we'll look at what Elijah did compared to Ahab. We'll see what he did.