

Where is the Lord God of Elijah?

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[0:00] Where is the Lord God of Elijah? What lessons can we learn from the life of Elijah?! I put to you these principles in Elijah's life and it reads as follows.

And he, Elisha, took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and smote the waters and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted thither and thither. Where is the Lord God of Elijah? That was a question of Elisha. And we can ask that today. Where's Elijah's God today? Where is God? The Lord God of Elijah, I put to you, is still the living and true God.

We read about the activities of Elijah and how God used him in a wonderful way. We're just going to touch on a few of those.

Let's look first at some characteristics, firstly, of Elijah. God's Elijah, if you like. Elijah was really a humble, ordinary kind of fellow.

[1:32] And we read of him in 1 Kings 17, verse 1, where he comes onto the scene. And it says, Here's Elijah, Elijah comes onto the scene really out of nowhere.

He appears kind of out of nowhere. There's no introduction of the man. Elsewhere we read of him in 2 Kings 1, verse 8, where it talks about him being a hairy man.

He is possibly, maybe not very attractive, being a hairy man. Nothing against hairy men, but he was sort of a rough sort of character by the sounds of it.

He was probably not very becoming, not very wealthy, it would seem. He was just an average sort of person. He came out of nowhere, it says. That's 2 Kings 1, verse 8.

Maybe I'm embellishing that a little bit. But the point is, he was unknown. He was ordinary. He was kind of a nobody, you could say, that he comes onto the scene. But it's interesting, the name Elijah has a great meaning.

[3:02] My God is Jehovah. It's got that sense of, he is that one and no other. He is God. You know, the Lord, he is God. L-O-R-D, capitals.

The Lord, Yahweh, he is God. And that was Elijah's very name. And this man, whose name means, my God is Jehovah, had real human frailties and feelings.

We read of that in James 5, 17, where it describes him. It tells of Elijah, as it reads in the King James, Elias, he was a man subject to like passions, as we are.

And he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. So here was the occasion, as he came to Ahab, the wicked king, he says, there shall not be dew nor rain, but according to my word, he prayed, and then there was this three years and six months with no rain.

The point I'd like to stress here in this verse is of Elijah, he was a man subject to like passions, as we are. He wasn't any kind of superman, he was a man such as we.

[4:24] He was human. And that gives us hope, I think, as people alive today, and when we think we're pretty ordinary, pretty human, pretty frail, and nothing to speak of, just like Elijah was.

He was human. He fled from a woman, he challenged him, the queen, he yielded to discouragement, he was weak before Jezebel, he ran away from work and duty.

There was lots about Elijah that showed he was really a weak man of himself. And yet, for all of that, Elijah is a role model for us, for you and me.

In the context of James, it's saying that our prayer can be, as a righteous man, it can be effectual and fervent. And it gives Elijah as that example. We can pray like Elijah prayed, we can know God's working like Elijah knew.

So Elijah is a role model for us, he relied upon God. Hudson Taylor once thought that God was looking for men strong enough to use, but then he learnt that God was really looking for men weak enough to use.

[5:35] And that's you and me, isn't it? Can you say amen to that? I'm weak enough for God to use. Amen. That's what we need to be. And so Elijah was an ordinary man, yet we see what he was called, he was called a man of God.

And that's an encouragement too for you and me. As ordinary human vessels, we can actually, all of us, as ordinary men and women, we can likewise know that God calls you his. You are a man of God. You are a woman of God here today. And it tells us that as the woman said, this is 1 Kings 17, 24, this ordinary man yet was called a man of God, trustworthy and truthful. It tells us how the woman said to Elijah, now by this I know that thou art a man of God and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth. So here we see, this was the occasion where, and we're not going to cover all of the various segments that portray these truths. But the context of this verse here is where a widow woman is saying this after Elijah prayed and her son was restored back to life. So she recognised Elijah, this ordinary man, he was a man of God and that the word of the Lord was in his mouth.

[6:56] In 1 Kings 18, 36, another thing that he's called, he's called a servant of God. Elijah the prophet is called a servant of God. Notice, he was a man of God, a servant of God and a big feature too of Elijah's life, over and over again we notice the word of the Lord, the word of the Lord, the word of the Lord.

Over and over again, the word of the Lord came unto him and he applied the word. So it's the same for you and me. These are principles we can apply. We as ordinary vessels, men and women, ordinary people, we can be men and women of God and we can know the word of God. We've got it. We've actually got more than Elijah had. We've got it between the covers of our Bibles. The word of the Lord has come to us and of Elijah it says that he applied the word numbers and numbers of times.

It tells us in the word of God how we should study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth. So we've got that blessing today brothers and sisters to have the word of truth in our very hands.

The whole word of God the whole truth the truth and nothing but the truth. And notice that also we see not only does he know the word of the Lord he knows the hand of the Lord too the hand of God on his life.

[8:20] Now through the Bible there's 54 references to the hand of God the hand of the Lord and of Elijah it says the hand of the Lord was working in his life.

So in other words the power of the Holy Spirit was evident in his life. As we read for example 1 Kings 18 46 it says the hand of the Lord was on Elijah.

It's another feature of this ordinary man he had the word of God he had the hand of God on his life. And it says of him that the hand of the Lord was on Elijah and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. So again this is the the occasion where the abundance of rain was coming he saw the the cloud as the size of a man's hand and it says that the hand of the Lord came on Elijah and he ran.

He girded up his loins and he ran. God was with him. The Spirit of God was with him. And he was responsive to the Spirit of God. He was obedient to it. I like to Stephen for example where in the New Testament it talks about the hand of the Lord was with them.

[9:34] The early church and Stephen as he preached the Lord Jesus the hand of the Lord was with them. A great number believed and turned unto the Lord. And we can know the hand of the Lord on our church. We can know the hand of the Lord on our life today.

So Elijah back to Elijah in Elijah's life God was in action. The Lord was at work and Elijah was submitted to the word of the Lord to the Lord for God to use him as his vessel.

Elijah had faith and courage and zeal. Elijah stood up to royalty to danger and to famine and he had the courage to stand for God's truth and rebuke the king for his evil ways.

Now when we stand up for truth we often get mocked for it. When you stand up for truth you often get criticised for it. When you stand up for the Lord when you're witnessing people don't always appreciate that even church goers.

We should stand up for God. We should be faithful to the word of God. Elijah faithfully challenged the people of God is another thing that he did and yet he was blamed and accused for being a troublemaker.

[10:40] We see that in 1 Kings 18 17 it tells how Ahab came to him and Ahab said to Elijah art thou he that troubleth Israel? Really it was Ahab who was the troublemaker but he accused Elijah of being a troublemaker of causing trouble.

The thing is about Elijah he wasn't afraid to speak out. He wasn't afraid to rebuke to stir to provoke to challenge to speak out against evil. There's a time for that.

There's a time to reprove rebuke exhort. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel had led Israel into gross idolatry increasing idolatry.

That's the context of it here. Ahab as much as he had a position that would normally be accorded reverence as a king he was an idolater and he was bringing idolatry into the land and so Elijah was rightful in rebuking even the king for his idolatry and the apostasy because it says of Ahab that he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.

So Ahab promoted the worship of Baal he brought the worship of Baal into the land and the whole nation was backsliding. This is the context here. Elijah was willing to trouble those at ease in Zion.

[12:08] In other words the people who had become careless or compromising in sin Elijah was willing to stand up and say no this is wrong. He was willing to stand up even to the king more than one time and Elijah was accused.

Being a troublemaker that might happen to you. You faithfully give the word you faithfully witness you tell people without fear or favour that's what Elijah did.

He was willing to lose his reputation. He wasn't afraid to rebuke kings. He was fearless and faithful and he confronted sin. Another thing about Elijah was that he restored the altar of God in the name of God.

We see that in 1 Kings 18 30. another occasion where Elijah shows the kind of character of the man that he was.

1 Kings 18 30 Elijah said unto all the people come near unto me and all the people came near unto him and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. He repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord and he made a trench about the altar as great as would contain two measures of seed.

[13:24] The occasion here is where there was a contest between the prophets of Baal and the true God and the idolaters that made this big carry on of cutting themselves and jiving and dancing all of their false worship to Baal and nothing and then we see Elijah he rebuilt he repaired the altar he restored it and then he poured water on it and then we'll see of course as the account tells us that the fire came as we'll talk about but the point I'm making here is that one of the things that Elijah did was he repaired the altar he built the altar in the name of the Lord now that's got a picture for us of spiritual life Elijah acted to reinvigorate the spiritual life of God's people here again is a principle we can apply are we caring about the altar in other words the spiritual life the worship and honour of our God it's something we should care about our worship our honour of God the people had neglected to worship and honour

God the altar speaks of the place God's people wait before him in faith the place of the altar had been neglected friends like Elijah we must meet with God we must meet with him Elijah repaired the altar in other words he restored the true worship that had been neglected and he wanted to give God the glory he repaired the altar we can think of that in our own lives as a kind of principle of Elijah's life how's my spiritual life how's my worship how's my time of worship how's my faith how's my devotion maybe I need to repair the altar as it were in other words go back to rebuild what I had and restore it again that spiritual life and worship and notice when the fire falls it burns up

everything burns all the sacrifice it burnt all the wood everything was burnt up we could think of that spiritually too couldn't we how God wants to burn up that which he wants to take out the way that we would be a living sacrifice another thing that Elijah did was he acted in that he killed the enemies of God the false prophets so he didn't kind of accommodate falsehood he didn't accommodate that which was wrong so here's

Elijah you could picture him in his rough sheepskin cloak this hairy man Elijah as he was called confronting the worshippers of Baal dressed in their splendid vestments you know they were there with all their religious vestments and all of their ritual and their evident devotion they were very fervent the Baal worshippers but Elijah was very simple he was just very reverent and godly in 1 Kings 18 verse 40 as we see the fire fell and the false god Baal was shown to be a false god and then Elijah says this take the prophets of Baal let not one of them escape and they took them and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slew them there the evil seed had to be destroyed it's the same today when we see the false herd we see the false doctrine we see the false teaching that abounds it has to be destroyed we don't want a bar of it and that's why we try to

God helping us as a church to stand for sound doctrine so not deviate so not accommodate we don't want to accommodate the prophets of Baal as it were they need to be taken away and so we see that Elijah removed the enemies of God 450 of them he cut out the cancer of the false prophets and their worldly philosophies and that's why at times I urge people in our church don't tune into such and such a TV preacher because they're preaching falsehoods maybe it's 99% okay but it's that 1% of poison you don't want to touch it it's tainted so you've got to cut out the cancer and Elijah preached the word of God of righteousness sin and of judgment he dealt seriously with error he didn't accommodate the prophets of Baal he didn't mamby-pamby or pussyfoot around there was no dialogue or compromise they didn't have some interfaith meeting Elijah didn't establish a Mount Carmel ecumenical interfaith ministerial association he didn't have some kind of pally time with the prophets of Baal they were to be put away

Elijah dared to challenge the holy cows and it's the same for us brothers and sisters that we have to stand rock solid we need to stand firm to promote the truth we have to fight error there's a time to speak out against it and Elijah did just that he withstood the apostate king the backslidden nation and the idolatrous priesthood so we see God's Elijah the man of God man of God just like you and me just ordinary just an ordinary man what did we see he received the word of God so can we can't we we can receive the word of God go back to the Bible it says that he responded to the hand of God that we know that we are relying upon God's power the hand of the Lord must be upon us too upon his church he responded to the hand of God he rebuked the people of God even the king there's a time to rebuke we've got to get back the zeal that we're willing to stand to stand and be counted to stand even if we stand it seems alone because Elijah thought he was alone too but of course he found out he wasn't because there's lots of others out there who stand for

[19:33] God too maybe not as strongly and he restored the altar of God in the name of God he repaired the altar it had been neglected he saw that it had been neglected and he rebuilt it talks about prayer doesn't it maybe we need to rebuild the altar of prayer that which has been neglected that spiritual worship that devotion rebuild it if you've found it's been neglected if there's cobwebs growing over some parts of your spiritual life go back to the altar back to prayer and Elijah removed the enemies of God he took an uncompromising stand it says Elijah was mighty in prayer that he prayed earnestly James 5 17 as we looked at he prayed earnestly!

and he prayed again pray and pray again there had been a great famine now there came a great rain when he prayed again it says that there was a cloud as of a man's hand the size of a man's hand you could think of the hand of the Lord maybe it was really the hand of God that he saw the size of a cloud was just the size of a hand and then he knew that abundance of rain was coming and then it says how the clouds and the wind came there was a great rain a great rain so there is great power in prayer is the point we've got the same God we're just as ordinary as Elijah was we've got the same God we've seen God's Elijah now let's look at Elijah's God where is the Lord God of Elijah where is God friends God is where he always has been and always will be isn't he he's alive he's the true and living God we see that in 1

Kings 17 verse 1 where is the Lord God of Elijah who is Elijah's God he's the Lord God of Israel and he's alive Elijah said of him as the Lord God of Israel liveth the Lord God that we love and know is the living God he's real he's active he's alive he still is today and he's the true and living God he's still present working in his church in his people he still cares and reaches out and he still meets our deepest need so he's a God who's alive secondly he's a God who answers prayer he's the living God and he's the loving God he's the God who hears and answers prayer it says of our God the Lord heard the voice of Elijah this is the occasion where he prayed for the widow woman's son it says the Lord heard the voice of Elijah he heard his prayer Elijah heard the voice of the Lord and the Lord heard the voice of Elijah amen so we think of this living

God he sustains he even uses the ravens as we found through Elijah's life God sustained him even through ravens which were dumb unclean and fearful of man he picked a bird that would ordinarily not have anything to do with men these were unclean a dumb bird fearful but God used a raven to sustain him this God provides he took care of the widow woman and her practical needs this helpless widow woman and he responds he revives he brought the son back to life so he's the living God and he's the God who answers he hears and he answers prayer and he blesses us with gifts and graces Elijah was in touch with God he says he prayed back to James 5 again it says confess Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months and he prayed again and the heaven gave rain and the earth brought forth her fruit so

Elijah it says as we read there an ordinary man a man subject to like passions just like us what made the difference the spirit of Elijah was the spirit of prayer he prayed earnestly!

[24:06] it's interesting where it says he prayed earnestly there in verse 17 literally you could transliterate it he prayed in prayer he prayed in prayer so he prayed earnestly!

he prayed! he really prayed! Elijah was sustained as we saw by the ravens by the widow he multiplied the meal and the oil he was sustained by the angel God gave special food for Elijah for 40 days for supernatural strength for 40 days think of it for us today that God answers prayer doesn't he he does answer our prayer he actively works in answer to prayer Elijah prayed and God answered with food and with fire the God that answer it it's interesting that's what Elijah called God he says he's the God that answer and when you look at Elijah's prayers really they were very simple prayers very short and simple yet reverent we see for one example again back to the occasion where the contest was between the false prophets and

Elijah as God's prophet as they came to that time of the offering of the evening sacrifice this is 1 Kings 18 36 Elijah the prophet came near and said Lord God of Abraham Isaac and of Israel let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel and that I am thy servant and that I have done all these things at thy word hear me oh Lord hear me that this people may know that thou art the Lord God and that thou has turned their heart back again really just a 15 it was strong wasn't it it was strong think of what he said as he gave reverence to the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob and he says let it be known that I am thy servant I have done all these things at thy word hear me oh Lord that this people may know that thou art the

Lord God and that thou hast turned their heart back again friends we can be like Elijah ordinary average everyday we can know the God of Elijah we can know the Lord who answers prayer the God who answers prayer and the things that Elijah did were according to the word of God he didn't just do anything willy nilly as he thought in his own eyes to do he did that which was right that which was according to the word of God that which another interesting thought about how Elijah described his God he's the God before whom I stand we see that in a couple of references we see that 1 Kings 17 1 as he said unto Ahab as the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand there shall not be June or rain these years but according to my word and then we see it again Elijah said as the Lord will surely show myself unto him today so it's got that sense Elijah stood before the Lord I put to you we could think of that as perhaps indicating that he knew the presence of God he was standing in the presence of God he was in the presence of God he knew the secret place of the most high he was before God standing before God he was in the presence of God that's a telling point there so friends tonight you might say well how does this apply to me friends your prayers can be very brief yet very powerful it's about who you're standing before isn't it it's about whether you're standing before him whether you're trusting him we see the vain cry of the false prophets of religion they prayed hear us it says they leaped they had fervor they had lots of in many circles in some

church circles there's a lot of spectacle and show but no holy spirit he's not there in

[28:37] Elijah's worship the altar was central in a way the calvary was central the sacrifice was provided he made a big thing about the altar of rebuilding the altar when we think of sacrifice to me it pictures calvary the ultimate sacrifice speaks of calvary doesn't it we could think and it's been said the fire of maybe we need to be on the altar too don't we that sense where we're living sacrifices the fire of God falls when we're on the altar we can be yielded as a sacrifice on the altar so Elijah's God is alive he answers prayer and another thing about Elijah's God is he accepts repentant sinners he accepts us who come to him by faith we see that in 1 Kings 18 as Elijah prayed hear me oh Lord hear me that this people may know that thou art the Lord God that thou has turned their heart back again then the fire of the

Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust and licked up the water that was in the trench And when all the people saw it they fell on their faces and they said the Lord he is the God the Lord he is the God I think formerly these were ones who were really following after Baal and they were worshippers of Baal now they saw the Lord he is the God they fell down in worship in reverence there's obviously a picture of salvation here as they trusted the great wonderful God who has revealed himself to them and so where is the Lord God of Elijah I put to you that he is Jesus Christ the same yesterday today and forever he still alive he still cares he still answers prayer he still the prayer answering God he still powerful and he still accepts sinners we can come unto him and know his salvation and we see where is the

Lord God of Elijah he's with people just like Elijah just like you and me they're just ordinary humans we see of Elijah he had lots of faults it tells of Elijah that he got disappointed we can get disappointed with life we can struggle for for a time Elijah ran off and he fled to hide in a cave he was kind of cowering as this wimpy man hiding away he ran away he got tired he got weary he got discouraged and he felt alone afraid he despaired after Queen Jezebel's threats it tells of him in 1 Kings 19 for example and he sat down under a juniper tree and he requested for himself that he might die and he said it is enough now oh Lord take away my life it is enough take away my life I'm not better than my fathers he got really down hearted here he said it is enough I've had enough he was subject to like passions as we are he was very human even such that he felt like throwing in the towel and giving up he felt quite alone and then of course we know God revealed the 7000 who haven't bowed the knee you're not alone I am with you for one thing so he was subject to like passions as we are look friends tonight I think as far as an application of Elijah's life to your life and mine today my God is Jehovah can't you say that he's my God he's my God the Lord he is the God he is the God the God Elijah had to tune in to the still small voice God revealed to him really sometimes the quiet voice it's just God can speak to us quietly as we tenderly and reverently take heed to his word it's that still small voice isn't it to be sensitive to it to know

God revealed to him you're not the only one who loves me there's lots of others here that do love me God revealed to him how he can answer his need there is a sound of abundance of rain all the wonderful workings of God through Elijah's life to think that he had such miracles and yet he still had disappointment it's the human nature isn't it you!

[33:52] see all the sat in a cave or under a juniper tree and it's enough I've had enough we can have that we can be like Elijah he's got the same passions just like we have but we've got the same God and sometimes just got to tune in to that still small voice like Elijah had to he had to oh actually I better start listening to God again I better start listening to the so to wrap up tonight to reflect on Elijah's life to consider that question where is the Lord God of Elijah look at Elijah the faithful action that he took you and me brothers and sisters can know the Lord God of Elijah we can know him we can also be as ordinary

Elijah was a man of God there's no greater title we could ask for is there really that God would say you are a man of God a woman of God that you are mine you belong to me be a man of God in this world that is godless be a man of God receive the word of God treasure it take it seriously!

God is over you he is guiding you directing you pressing you convicting you holding you the hand of God rebuke the people of God there might be time where you when necessary you give a needful

rebuke of course there's a way to do it tactfully but there's need sometimes to clearly rebuke where something is false or wrong needs correction there's a time for that and Elijah rebuked the people of God where it was necessary he restored the altar of God think of our personal worship the altar as it were speaks of our worship rebuild the altar restore the altar as it were remove the enemies of God where there's plain false teaching we remove that we don't want to toy with anything that's false if it's false we don't want to!

where Elijah he's still here he's here now he's here with you he's in you that know him he is still the living God the true and living God he's still alive he's the living God he's still alive he still answers prayer pray don't neglect to pray sometimes we pray last when we should pray first don't we I know that can be humanly what we do instead of praying first we pray last he still answers prayer don't neglect to pray and he still accepts repentant sinners we see the people of God God revealed himself they said the Lord he is God the Lord he is God they fell on their faces oh that would see such revival in our land in our world in this city that we can see people fall on their faces and come to him in conviction in faith to trust him that's what we want isn't it well we still have the Lord God of Elijah it can still happen in Adelaide in Elizabeth it can happen in our time and place we just need to! seek after that Lord God of Elijah where is he?

[37:36] he's right here he's not far far away he's with us right here right now let's pray Lord we thank you that your word tells us that you are the Lord God of Elijah Lord we see the wonders of your workings and the tremendous wonders of what you've done as much as we haven't really unpacked that much tonight yet Lord we see the wonder of that contest the prophets of Baal and how they were mocked and shown to be false and you answered by fire you are the God who answered by fire Lord we thank you that you are the true and living God we thank you that you would use even such as Elijah as much as he was at times prone to human feelings of downheartedness and discouragement we see that Elijah at times was running away feeling alone Lord we can know you are with us just like you revealed to

Elijah that you revealed yourself to him through your word we can know you we pray that each one might know that you are the Lord God of Elijah and that not only are you the Lord God of Elijah but you are our God as we by faith trust you through the wonder of Calvary's cross that makes relationship with you possible Lord we thank you that we can trust you and know you and know your wonderful power in our lives today we thank you Lord for each one here gathered those who might be watching and Lord for the comfort of your word that it gives us faith to trust you more to pray and to keep on praying to pray again to pray with prayer as it were to pray earnestly to have that rebuilding of the altar where we've neglected it Lord help us to rebuild our spiritual walk with you and so that we can be the ones who stand with you in the sense that we'll know your presence that we'll be in the presence of you our God in that secret place of the most high we can abide us