

The God of Elijah

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the need for men and women to stand against the tide of evil in the world by putting their trust and hope in God and standing for righteousness.

Duration: 36:35

Scripture: Psalm 94:1

Topics: "God Of Elijah"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Brian focuses on Psalm 94 and the need for God's vengeance against the wicked. He emphasizes that God is aware of the wickedness and injustice in the world, even though some may think He does not see or care. Pastor Brian also discusses the reasons for the fall of Rome, including the decay of religion and the internal corruption of the people. He urges believers to stand against the tide of evil and align their hearts with God, so they can experience His power and see His work manifested in their lives. The sermon concludes with an invitation for those who need to get right with God to take the first step and seek His forgiveness.

Transcript

And now shall we turn in our Bibles to Psalm 94. I'll read the first, the outnumbered verses. Pastor Brian, who is in Vista speaking this morning, will not be leading the congregation in the even-numbered verses.

You'll just have to lead yourself. Shall we stand as we read God's Word. O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself.

Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they never conceive our things? They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and they afflict thine heritage. And yet they say, the Lord shall not see, and neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. He that created the ear, can he not hear? He that formed the eye, can he not see? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

Blessed is the man whom thou chastest, O Lord, and chastest him not at all. That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. But judgment shall return unto righteousness, and the upright in heart shall follow it.

Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. In the multitude of my thoughts within me, comforts delight my soul. Shall no more iniquity of fellowships be, which the great iniquity of my

Father.

They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood. For the Lord is my defense, and my God is far from their reach. And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness.

Yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off. Let's pray. Father, oftentimes as the psalmist cried out, we also from our depths of our soul cry out, O God, show thyself.

When we look at the things that are happening in the world in which we live today, when we see the rising tide of evil engulfing, Lord, the righteous. When we see your laws being cast aside, we cry out, Lord, show thyself. Lord, we desire for your kingdom to come.

We desire that day when your will shall be done here on earth, even as it is in heaven. And so we pray even so come quickly, Lord Jesus, deliver the world from its death throes. And come and establish, Lord, your righteous kingdom.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You may be seated.

Ruth Andrews went to be with the Lord this week. There will be a memorial service for her next Saturday. Ruth was active in our women's joyful life for so many years as she and her husband have been active here in Calvary since way back, 10 days earlier.

And so, you that knew her, she had a wonderful home going. The family was all gathered this past week. And so, next Saturday, the memorial service, the office can give you the time and all.

It will be here in the sanctuary. Tonight, we'll be studying 2 Kings chapters 1 through 3. As we are moving through the Bible once again, this time a little, a little faster pace than the last time through, but still slow enough for everyone to keep up with us. And so, read the three chapters.

Join with us tonight. Let's go through the Bible together. Let's find out what God has to say about this world, especially in the days in which we live.

This morning, we'd like to draw your attention to 2 Kings chapter 2. And our text is found in verse 14. Elisha took the mantle of Elijah that fell down from him. He smote the waters of the Jordan and said, where is Jehovah God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither, and Elisha went over.

Elisha was chosen by God to replace Elijah as God's spokesman to the nation of Israel. Elisha had left the farm, and he was a servant to Elijah. And the time had come for Elijah to be taken up into heaven.

And so, he and Elisha began to journey towards Moab. And in Bethel, in Jericho, as they came to these towns, the prophets came out and they said to Elisha, do you know that your master is going to be taken from you today? And he said, yes, I know it. Hold your peace.

And so, they journeyed and they came to the Jordan River. And Elijah rolled up his mantle, and he smote the waters of the Jordan River, and they parted. And he and Elijah walked over on dry land.

As they were walking and talking to each other, suddenly there was a chariot of fire that appeared. And Elijah was caught up in a whirlwind into heaven. And as his mantle fell, Elisha cried out, my father, my

father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof.

And he took the mantle of Elijah. He came back to the Jordan River, and he smote the waters as did Elijah, crying out, where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? That is a cry that has been echoed many times, even by us today. Where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? When the nation of Israel was turning away from God.

Elijah, the prophet of God, challenged the false prophets. He challenged the corrupted leadership of the nation. And God empowered him to triumph over those evil forces.

They had had the contest on Mount Carmel. God responded to the prayer of Elijah and answered by fire, showing that he was indeed the true God. And we wonder, where today is the God of Elijah? Our nation is being corrupted by its leadership.

Our state legislature is passing one bill after another to force us to accept the homosexual lifestyle as a natural relationship. It is even mandated now by state law that our children in the public school system must be educated in the subject of homosexuality. And the homosexuals are invited into the classrooms to share with the children their lifestyles and to advocate it as a healthy natural relationship.

They are pushing laws that would empower homosexual couples to adopt babies. And we wonder, when this kind of leadership is controlling our nation, where is the God of Elijah? We have killed off and are killing off succeeding generations. Since the extreme liberal court decided in the Roe v. Wade case and opened the doors for abortions, some 40 million babies have been aborted thus far in the United States.

One of the candidates for governorship of the state of California is making his approval of killing these babies as one of his major planks for election as he is advertising and promoting the fact that he is for the abortion laws. And he is using that as one of his major planks in his bid to be reelected as our governor. Abortion has left such a dent in the workforce, 40 million people, that we must actually allow illegal immigrants to flood into our country to make up for the lack in the workforce.

Our culture, which was developed and came to such a high standard of living because of the Christian values, is rapidly declining into oblivion as our nation becomes more and more a pagan nation. It takes 2.1 babies per family to maintain the population. Each couple must have an average of 2.1 babies.

That's just to maintain the population. Since the abortion laws and other causes which we will discuss, in our Western world, the average couple today, the average is 1.4 babies per couple. You don't realize the impact that this will have until you look at it over a period of years.

It means that in Europe, by the year 2050, there will be 100 million less Europeans. 100 million less Europeans. It is in contrast to Asia, Latin America, and Africa, where there is an increase of population of 100 million every 15 years.

So that by the time 2050 arrives, there will be 9 billion people on the planet Earth. But those of the Western culture will have diminished by some 200 million. So we see that people are actually going against God's order to multiply and replenish the Earth.

The reason for our declining birth rate is threefold. First of all, there are those couples who have decided that children would get in the way of their pleasure. And so they have deliberately decided not to have any children in order that they might indulge themselves in material things.

And so the women have joined the workforce with the husbands in order that they might have a higher standard of life and to ensure that they've decided not to have any babies. And then we have the situation of the increased number of the same-sex couples. And of course, with the same-sex couples, you don't have any reproduction or growth in your society.

The third, of course, is abortion, which is taking a tremendous toll in our Western culture. It is, of course, no different from what happened in Israel. When they were worshiping the God of pleasure and when unwanted babies would come along, because they didn't have methods of abortion in that day, they would wait until the baby was born and then they would throw the newborn babies into the bonfires that were built for Baal and Molech.

General William Booth, who was the founder of the Salvation Army, once said, the chief danger of the 20th century will be religion without the Holy Spirit, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and heaven without hell. The warning of General Booth, the things that he described as the greatest dangers are things that have transpired in our culture today. Gibbon, in his classic work on the rise and the fall of the Roman Empire, declared that Rome was not conquered really by an outside enemy, but the moral planks had become so rotten it just collapsed upon itself.

And he listed the five reasons why Rome fell. Number one, the rapid increase of divorce with the undermining of dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the foundation of human society. Number two, higher and higher taxes and the spending of the public monies for free bread and the circuses for the populace.

Number three, the mad craze for pleasure, sports becoming every year more exciting and more brutal. The gladiators really had nothing on the WWF. Number four, the building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within, in the decadence of the people.

Number five, the decay of religion, faith fading into mere form, losing touch and becoming impotent to warn and to guide the people. And thus, he sees the reasons for the fall of Rome. And as we look at these five reasons for the fall of Rome, we realize that this is where we are as a nation, and corrupted internally.

How long can we stand on rotten planks? As we see these things in our nation today, we might well ask, where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? We need him to intervene before we destroyed ourselves. But we might better ask, where are the Elijahs? The men of God who are willing to stand as a lone solitary voice against the evil that is pervading our society. Men who will dare to speak out against these evils.

Men who will dare to challenge the powers that be. In the time of Elijah, we read another account. There was the son of a widow who was sick, so sick that he quit breathing.

And Elijah took the child up into his loft, and he laid him on his bed. And he prayed, O Jehovah my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the scripture tells us, and Jehovah heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

Our world today is plagued with all kinds of sicknesses. Jesus said that this would be one of the signs of the last days, the pestilences. And though we have accomplished a lot with modern medicine, we've seemed to have created excellent medicines that are able to now counteract things that formerly would have been fatal.

Yet there are exotic new viruses that seem to be impervious to the medicines that have been developed to kill them in their previous forms. We have, of course, today people that are afflicted with many kinds of diseases and things that modern medicine really as yet has no cure. I think of cancer, I think of the HIV virus, and these things that we have in these days.

And thus, there are many people that come down with cancer and various forms of cancer. And we watch them as that cancer sort of takes away their life. And as we pray for them, and as we call out unto the Lord, we wonder where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah, that one who is able to even raise the dead, that one who has the power to heal the sick.

Where is Jehovah, God of Elijah? But again, where are the Elijahs? Those men of such faith that they'll believe in the power of God even to raise the dead. On another occasion, when drought had brought starvation to the nation, Elijah saw a widow woman gathering sticks. He asked her for some bread.

And she said, we're out of flour and oil. I have only enough to make two little cakes. I'm going to make them, my son and I are going to eat them, and then we're just going to die.

That's all we've got. Just that small little bit of flour and oil left. Elijah said to her, make first for me some bread, and then make for you and your son.

For thus saith Jehovah, the barrel shall not waste, nor shall the oil disappear until this famine is over. And so she did according to the saying of Elijah. And she and Elijah and her son did eat many days, we read, and the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruise of oil fail, according to the word of Jehovah, which he spoke by Elijah.

Some of you are going through difficult financial times. You live from paycheck to paycheck, and sometimes there is no paycheck. And you might find yourself asking, where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? The secret of the widow's supply was giving to God first.

When Elisha returned from the Jordan River, he smote the waters of the Jordan with a mantle, and he cried, where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? The waters parted, and he walked through on dry ground. Let me assure you that even as the Lord was with Elijah, so was he with Elisha. And that double portion that Elisha sought was given to him.

And there were twice as many miracles wrought by Elisha as there was Elijah. The God of Elijah lives today. In Malachi 3.6, he said, I am Jehovah, I change not.

In Isaiah's day, the people were saying, awake, awake, O put on strength, O arm of Jehovah. And God answered them, awake, awake, put on strength, O Zion. In other words, God is saying to them, I'm not asleep.

You're the ones that are asleep. I haven't changed. You're the ones who have changed.

I'm still the same God. I'll still do the same things. But you are the ones who are slumbering.

You are the ones who have changed. Isaiah said to the people, behold, Jehovah's hand is not short that it cannot save. Neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear.

But your iniquities have separated you from God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear. It's not that he cannot hear. It's that he will not hear.

And then Isaiah gives them the reason why he won't listen. The hands, he said, that you raised to him in prayer are defiled with blood. Your fingers with iniquity.

Your lips have spoken lies. Your tongue has muttered perverseness. No one is calling for justice or seeking the truth.

They are trusting in vanity. And they speak lies, and they plot mischief, and they bring forth iniquity. The real question is not where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah, but where are the men and women who as Elijah will put their trust and their hope in Jehovah and stand against the evil of this world in which we live today.

Longfellow, the poet, wrote, I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old familiar carols play, and wild and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth, goodwill to men. And I thought how as the day had come, and the belfries of all Christendom had rolled along the unbroken song of peace on earth, goodwill to men. But in despair, I bowed my head.

There is no peace on earth, I said, for hate is strong, and it mocks the song of peace on earth, goodwill to men. Then pealed the bells more loud and deep. God is not dead, nor doth he sleep.

The wrong shall fail, and the right prevail with peace on earth, goodwill toward men. But God is looking today for men and women who will dare to stand against the tide of evil that is in our world today. As Paul describes the non-believer, he said that they were actually going according to the flow of the world, the course of this world.

The word course comes as a root word of weathervane. They are just sort of flowing with the world tide. And he said, which is being controlled by the prince of the power of the air.

Our world fads, fashions and all are being directed by Satan, the powers of darkness. And many people are just going with the tide, going with the flow. And that's sort of their, you know, don't rock the boat.

Don't, you know, say anything that is negative. Just live and let live kind of a attitude towards the things that are happening in our world today. But we are flowing to destruction.

We're on our way to destruction. People don't seem to realize that. And God called Elijah to stand against the flow, to dare to challenge the king and his people with the evil that they had introduced into the nation.

And we need men and women today that will do the same thing. As Paul was talking to the Athenian philosophers, he said, I want to talk to you about the true God, the one who created our universe. For in him, we live and we move and we have our being.

God is wanting to help you. He dwells with us. He dwells in us.

It isn't where is the God of Elijah? It is where of the men who, as Elijah, will stand up for God. God can part the waters for you today. He can help you make your stand for righteousness.

He can touch and heal your body today. And he can provide for your every need. For the God of Elijah lives.

In him, we live, we move, we have our being, and he wants to show himself strong on your behalf. For the eyes of Jehovah go to and fro throughout the entire earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are right towards his. Get your heart right before God.

Get your heart in tune with God's heart. Let his will become your desires. And you'll be amazed at what God will do.

The waters of Jordan can still be parted by the God that we serve. Let's pray. Father, today in this world in which we live, when the powers of darkness have taken control and are leading us down into the pit, leading us on the path of destruction, help us, Lord, that we as Elijah will stand up.

That as Elijah, Lord, we'll stand against the powers of darkness that are taking control. And that we will dare to speak the truth. That we will dare to speak for Jehovah, the living God.

And we pray, Father, that even as you confirmed the words of Elijah, so confirm the words of your people. Even as you manifested your power through this prophet, so, Lord, manifest your power this day. Give a witness, Lord, of your power to the people.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we stand? Our pastors are standing down here at the front today.

It may be that you are in need of Jehovah, the God of Elijah. You're in need of his help today. Maybe you've sort of backed off in the face of adversity.

You've sort of been cowed by the world in which you live. Maybe it's in the classroom, in the university or whatever, where you've just sort of silenced, been silenced for fear of retaliation. Maybe it is that you need a touch in your body today, even as the widow's son.

You're sick and there are infirmities and you need God's touch. Or perhaps today you're in need of provisions. And God who multiplied the flour and the oil is able to multiply and to take care of your needs today.

The God of Elijah lives. We need to become aware and conscious of that. God lives.

Our God lives. He reigns. And he wants to show himself and he will show himself to those whose hearts are in harmony with his.

And so the secret is get your heart right with God. Get in harmony with God and you will experience, as did Elijah, the work of God. And you'll see the power of the living God manifested.

The waters will part and you can go through on dry ground. Our God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. These men are here to pray for you today.

Maybe you need to take the first step and just get right with God. The others will follow. But it takes first getting right with God.

And I would encourage you as we're dismissed, come forward. Let them pray with you and just, you can just say, I need to get right with God. And they'll pray for you today that God will begin that work of his spirit within your life.

Helping you to stand against the powers of darkness and evil. May the Lord watch over and keep you in his love. May we go forth as a mighty army in the power of our Lord, standing against the evil that is enveloping our world.

Standing for our Lord Jesus Christ in his name and in his strength. The Lord bless thee. And keep thee.

The Lord make his face to shine upon thee. And be gracious unto thee. And be gracious unto thee.

The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee. And give thee peace.

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