

# Elijah and Elisha

by Ken Baird

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*The sermon explores the life and ministry of Elijah, emphasizing the power of prayer and God's provision in times of need.*

**Duration:** 34:02

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 11:13-17

**Topics:** "Obedience To God", "Faithfulness Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon on Deuteronomy chapter 11, the preacher emphasizes the importance of diligently obeying God's commandments and loving Him with all our hearts and souls. He highlights the promise of God to provide rain in its due season, along with abundant crops and provisions for His people. However, the preacher also warns against turning away from God and serving other gods, as this would result in God's wrath and the withholding of rain and blessings. The sermon references the story of Elijah and the widow, where God miraculously sustained them with a never-ending supply of oil and meal, illustrating God's faithfulness to His word.

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## Transcript

Well, we trust this morning that your speaker will be broken. That's good. I'm glad you made that mistake, Bill, and ran those words together.

I'm not going to forget this. I like it. Mr. Harry Ironside, H.A. Ironside, for his initials, had a word, H.A.I., which is in the Bible.

There's a city by the name of H.A.I. It means a heap of ruins, and he liked to refer to himself, he liked, rather, referring to himself as a heap of ruins. I like it. I really do.

Thank you, Bill. I wouldn't have missed that for anything. In the seventeenth chapter of 1 Kings, we began a study of Elijah, and then it will go on into Elisha, for the Paul Porter.

Elijah was one of the greatest of the prophets, the speaking prophets. There were two kinds of prophets, the writing prophets and the speaking prophets. Elijah was a great speaking prophet.

I think probably Elijah is quoted more times in the New Testament than any other Old Testament prophet. I did not check that out. I'm relying on my memory, but I think that that is correct.

I think you'll find that is correct. He is the last prophet mentioned in the Old Testament. He is mentioned in Malachi chapter 4, and we might notice that.

It might be interesting to you. This great prophet of whom God thought so much, and of whom he has such, for whom he has such plans. Malachi chapter 4, verse 5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

And he shall turn the heart of the earth with a curse from the Old Testament. The last name in the Old Testament is the name I. And that is very fitting. We begin the Old Testament with the verse, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

We have God in the first verse of the Old Testament. We have God in the last verse. And we have Elijah mentioned as coming.

He has a tremendous responsibility, a tremendous ministry, at the end of the age. When he turns the heart of the fathers to the children, the heart of the children, the Lord comes and sets up his kingdom. Now this, even this build up in connection with Elijah, as to the importance of this man, we are immediately confronted with the fact that his posterity, or not posterity, his family tree is not mentioned.

He's called Elijah the Tishbite. God likes to pick up nobodies and make something out of them. This is true of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek's parents are not mentioned. His line of descendants are not mentioned. And yet, in the book of Hebrews, Melchizedek is given such a mighty place that Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

This is interesting. This man's descendants nor the progenitors, not at all. God picked him up in his grace.

This should teach you and me, that not to count too heavily upon our earthly, we should feel very, very, and God can use us. That's his grace. And that was true of Elijah.

We don't know his parents. That's about all we know about this man. Yet he appears on the scene, abruptly, suddenly, as a prophet.

And of course, the ministry of the prophets was to rebuke sin. The prophet had a twofold task. He foretold and he foretold.

And the prophets rebuked the sin that was in Israel. And this man rebuked the sin of wicked king Ahab. Ahab was a wicked king.

He married a woman by the name of Ephbaal, or rather Jezebel, the daughter of Ephbaal of the Zidonians. She was a Baal worshipper and she brought the worship of Baal right into the nation of Israel. This should be a warning that marriage is a very, very important thing.

I think that the most important decision outside of salvation itself is who I'm going to spend. Now, I hadn't thought that I would use this hour as a lecture to young people. But it comes in so readily and so handily and so naturally.

He got himself in trouble by marrying, and I say it again, the most important decision that we've got to make in our lives, outside of salvation, is who am I going to marry. It is very important. Wait on the Lord.

The Lord can undertake for you. Don't jump the gun. Don't take any old thing that comes along.

The Lord can provide for you. Well, he married the wrong one. He married the wrong one.

And oh, the damage, the damage this woman does. She's even mentioned in the New Testament in infamy. Jezebel.

King Ahab was extremely wicked, and Jezebel helped him along in that business. Now, Elijah appears on the scene. We read in verse 1, Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God liveth before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

Now, Elijah had had a prayer session before he went into the presence of Ahab. How do I know this? Oh, it isn't mentioned here, is it? But James talks about it. Well, how does James know about it? Well, the Lord told him.

Let's turn to the book of James, the last chapter of the book of James. Elijah had a prayer meeting before he went into the presence of Ahab. James chapter 5, verse 16.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Now, here's the example.

Elias, that's the New Testament, that's the Greek form of the name Elijah. Elias 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 fruits. Now, this man had prayed that it might not rain. Now, I don't think for a moment that he had the audacity to go into the presence of Ahab and say, it isn't going to rain, until he had it out with the Lord.

He said, it's not going to rain these years. Now, we know, James tells us, that the time was for three years and six months. He just mentioned, the book of James just mentioned these years.

James is under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he's not wrong. He's not adding to the Bible, he's just giving us information that we don't get in the Old Testament. Now, he prayed that there wouldn't be any rain.

I think probably Elijah had in mind those verses in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 11. Now, I can't say this for sure. But I'm going to say that perhaps Elijah had that portion of the scriptures in mind.

When he prayed that there wouldn't be any rain, he just didn't say, go in there on his own. He didn't go in there on his own and say, it's not going to rain for these years, and then go and pray about it. That's dangerous business.

You'd better try it. You'd better pray first, before you make these bold statements. He'd prayed about it.

And I think that he probably had the 11th chapter of Deuteronomy in mind. Let's look at it. Deuteronomy chapter 11, verse 13.

And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandment, which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give you rain of your land, the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn and thy wine and thine oil, and I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. Take heed to yourself, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside and serve other gods and worship them. And then the Lord's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heavens, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit, unless she perish quickly from off the good land which the Lord giveth you.

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul. Don't forget it. Now, I think Elijah had this portion in mind.

Elijah knew that Ahab and Jezebel were leading the children of Israel down the road. Now he says, Lord, I know how you just cut off the rain. And he prayed about it.

And James tells us he prayed earnestly about it. And he's the example that we have of effective prayer, the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availed much. So he goes into the presence of Abraham.

This is the only way you can wake him up. Cut off the rain. This would be effective, wouldn't it? I've prayed for rain.

Have you ever prayed for rain? I've prayed for rain. But God still controls the elements. I've prayed for rain.

Do you know what happened? It rained. I could tell you a story. But you'd say, oh, he's trying to take his place along with Elijah.

I didn't pray that it stopped for three years and six months. But I prayed for rain and got it. I think I'll tell you.

I may have told you before, but if I have, don't stop me. I want to tell it again. It was dry in Colorado.

And I told the Lord one day, I said, Lord, we need a half-inch of rain. Will you send us a half-inch of rain? Now, at this time, there wasn't any rain in the forecast. And the weather regime was such that there was no rain in prospect.

The Great Basin High, oh, let's not go into the meteorological aspects. At that time, there just didn't have any prospect. We need at least a half-inch of rain.

Nights later, there was a music of rain. I went out in the morning after the rain had passed on. And I looked at my rain gauge.

Well, I didn't have 49 hundredths. And I didn't have 51 hundredths. I had exactly 51 hundredths.

Now, the official rain gauge for the city of Boulder registered 23 hundredths. But the Lord saw it. And they said, why? I'm going to tell you another specific.

This comes so naturally here. I'm going to tell you another story. I had a daily vacation Bible.

And the people prayed definitely that at least four little children. I didn't know this. But at the end of the daily vacation Bible school, they told me the story then.

I said to them, are you definite in your prayers? You know, I think God likes to be challenged. I think God likes to be challenged. Now, I don't mean.

Now, listen. I've never prayed for a half-inch rain yet. And I've batted 1,000.

I think again. I'm not. I prayed in faith the first time.

I think I would be tempting God. I may pray for rain again. But I'm not going to.

I just gave me a nice little surprise. So, I'm going to keep batting 1,000. But, you know, I think God wants us to be specific enough to pray that it would rain.

And then he had to pray seven times that it would rain. Getting out of a situation. And you do, to pray to get into it.

I don't know whether you remember that. In the future, he's going to insert. It was very evident that he prayed seven times.

But the rain did come later. Now, he goes into the presence of Ahab after his prayer session. Very apparently.

When he told the Lord, Now, Lord, if this is the only way you can get their ear cut off. I mean the rain, of course. Peter cuts off the ears.

Just stop that rain. Stop it. So, I went into Ahab's presence.

And he told it. As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand. You know, Ahab didn't amount to much.

Before whom I stand. Ahab, I stand before God. Was he afraid of Ahab? No, he wasn't afraid of Ahab.

Before whom I stand. He was later afraid of Jezebel. Be careful of a woman who's angry.

But he wasn't afraid of Ahab. And so he says to Ahab, No rain. I stand before the Lord.

And there's not going to be any rain. But he made a mistake. As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand.

There shall not be dew nor rain these years. But according to my... There is where he made his mistake. According to my word.

Now, you know, that was very, very... That was very, very... Unwise on the part of Elijah to put it that way. Really, he was a prophet. God had told him to go to Ahab.

Now, he had no right to say, But according to my word. I should think that he would have remembered Moses' experience. When the second time that they were at Meribah.

And Moses was told to speak to the rock. That it would give forth his water. That Moses stood up and he called the children of Israel, Ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock? You know what that mistake cost him? Not going to make a promise.

Must we fetch you water out of this rock? Now, the reason that I feel... Now, you could just say in the case of Elijah. What is in the presence of Ahab on this occasion. You could just say, well... That was inferred that God had told him to say it.

Well, it isn't recorded that way. But according to my word. Him saying, get thee hence and turn eastward.

And hide by the brook here. That is to say, get out of sight. Hide yourself.

Somebody would say, well, certainly he's to hide himself. He's to hide himself because Ahab would. But he didn't get the opportunity of slaying him.

Now, I think that God said, now I'm going to tame you down on that. Why didn't you say that... Instead of saying, according to my word. We need to be.

We need to count on the Lord. We need to save the Lord. Now, he not only went and hid himself by the brook.

Got out of sight. Now, I don't know how that affected his professional reputation. But he was by the direction of God.

Now, God says in verse 4. And it shall be the ravens to feed thee there. Now, the ravens. And anything that an unclean bird touched was unclean.

But these ravens were special. And a raven. I don't know how that set with Elijah.

And the Lord fed him with bread and flesh in the morning. And bread and flesh in the evening. And he drank of the brook.

Now, I think you've probably seen the crows along the road. Feeding on dead rabbits that have been run over by automobiles. And they vacate the premises while you're driving by.

But they don't... Where did the ravens get this flesh? Savory prospective. And he provided for his servant. Now, the brook Kera.

Well, why wouldn't it? There was no rain. The brook dried up. You know, we do have a natural response to the obedient laws of nature.

Now, God didn't come right out of the ground. And he could have done it. Now, this was Elijah's idea.

To call for this... Elijah was a... He was pretty severe. He called fire down out of heaven. On two occasions.

And consumed 50 men on each occasion. Which was not general treatment. I wonder if Elijah began to think about the fact that he might have been left out in the rain.

The brook dried up. There was no water for him. It was natural.

It was the natural order of things. God's laws were just taking effect. But God was not stymied, if I may use that expression.

Defeated by the fact that the brook dried up. Then he sent him to a widow. Verse 8. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there.

For behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. Now, that must have had something to do with his day's statement, according to my word. He didn't get enough... Umbling by the fact that he ate the food that ravens had brought.

That he drank straight out of the brook. That wasn't enough. He says, I'm going to command a widow woman to sustain you.

Now the Gentiles and the Jews have no dealings with one another. You see, God is not through with Elijah quite yet. And so he says, I have commanded a widow woman.

I wonder if by this time Elijah might be getting the message. Do you suppose he did? I wonder how long it takes us to get the message. And be broken.

Thanks, Bill. I'll never forget that. You don't know what you did for me, Bill.

I think Elijah began to do some thinking. Well, he followed the Lord. He carried out the Lord's suggestion.

Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. For I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose, and what did Zarephath do? And he came to the gate of the city.

Behold, a widow woman. Now I want you to notice, please, that he tells her to bring him something to eat. Verse 11.

And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in mine hand. And she said to the Lord, Thy God limith, I have not a cake for me. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not, go and do as thou hast said, but make me thereof a little cake, and bring it underneath.

And after, make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel. She's got things straightened out now, hasn't she? For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal, neither shall the cruise of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth.

And she and he in her house did eat many days, neither did the cruise of oil fail. She spake, but Elijah had apparently learned his lesson. It's wonderful when they can learn.

The cruise of oil, that barrel of meal shall not waste. And it's God himself. Not according to my words this time.

Now, in the case of Moses, when Moses smoked that rock the second time, remember please, that after Moses smoked that rock the second time, when the water came out, the water came out of the rock, and they all drank. Now, Moses was told that he could not. Must we fetch, you rebels, this water out of this rock? He did, he made two mistakes.

He attributed the fetching the water out of the rock to him now. And he says, according to my word. But isn't it amazing? Who was with the Lord? Isn't that marvelous? Moses and Elijah.

You know, we can make mistakes, can't we? We can make mistakes. He doesn't, he didn't hold Peter's mistake, Peter's denial of the Lord against him. He recommissioned him.

And he let him go on. So we've got a gracious God. Now, our time is up.

But Elijah raises this widow's son. He was a blessing to her. Isn't it nice to be a blessing to people? Now, circumstances had forced him to go to this Gentile widow's home and to be sustained.

And even the Lord himself mentions this. He did, he does, he mentions it. Special mention of the fact that Elijah was sustained.

She, she really knew the Lord. Now, by this I know, is, he was a blessing to her. He was sent to her.

But nevertheless, we thank thee, Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for these examples that you've given us. Bless this series of studies as it is conducted, Lord's Day after Lord's Day. This we ask as we give thanks in our Savior's precious name.

Amen.

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