

# SO THESE PEOPLE WILL KNOW

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1 Kings 18:16-46 (p. 557)

April 22, 2018

*The Lord – he is God! The Lord – he is God!*

1 Kings 18:39

## 1. **Yahweh or Ba'al**

*Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions?  
If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”*

1 Kings 18:21

Key Question: Who is helping me identify the idols in my life?

## 2. **The prophet's prayer**

*At the time of the evening sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant . . . .”*

1 Kings 18:36

Key question: Am I praying for “prophetic” revival?

## 3. **What Elijah began to learn**

*So Elijah said, “Go and tell Ahab, ‘Hitch your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.’”  
Meanwhile, the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain came on and Ahab rode off to Jezreel.  
The power of the Lord came upon Elijah and, tucking his cloak in his belt,  
he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.*

1 Kings 18:44-46

1) REMNANT grace

2) Spiritual warfare starts in the HEART

3) Reliance on GOD'S POWER

## Further study of Elijah

*Concerning this salvation, the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently . . . .* 1 Peter 1:10

J.R. MacDuff's sermons on Elijah at [https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/1kings\\_macduff.html](https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/1kings_macduff.html)

Robert Bradshaw's introduction to Elijah at [https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/article\\_elijah.html](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/article_elijah.html). Bradshaw's analysis of Elijah and the Canaanite gods is especially helpful.

C. H. Spurgeons' sermons on 1 Kings 18 at <http://www.biblebb.com/files/spurgeon/0134.TXT>

Patterson, R. D., & Austel, H. J. 1, 2 Kings, p. 137-139. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 4* (Zondervan Publishing House, 1988).

Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History: Old Testament* (Eerdmans, 1975). Eldersheim, a 19<sup>th</sup> century convert to Christianity, did some great work on our Hebrew roots.

Alexander Maclaren's study of Elijah at [http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/1Kings\\_am.html#esbt1](http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/1Kings_am.html#esbt1)

## *Elijah as a Type of Moses*

<b>Elijah</b>	<b>Moses</b>
Confronted Ahab (1 Kings 17:1)	Confronted Pharaoh (Exod. 5:1)
Fled into the wilderness fearing for his life (1 Kings 19:3)	Fled into the wilderness fearing for his life (Exod. 2:15)
Miraculously fed "...bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening..." (1 Kings 17:6)	Miraculously fed "...meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning..." (Exod. 16:8, 12)
Spoke authoritatively for the Lord in his own name (1 Kings 17:1)	Spoke authoritatively for the Lord in his own name (Deut. 5:1)
Gathered all Israel to Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:19)	Gathered all Israel to Mount Sinai (Exod. 19:17)
Combated the prophets of Ba'al (1 Kings 18:20-40)	Combated the magicians of Pharaoh (Exod. 7:8-13, 20-22; 8:1-7)
Successful in his intercession for Israel to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel (1 Kings 18:36-39)	Successful in his intercession for Israel to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel (Exod. 32:11-14)
Elijah took twelve stones at Carmel "...according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob..." (1 Kings 18:30-32)	Moses had twelve pillars set up at Sinai "...corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel..." (Exod. 24:4)
The Lord accepted Elijah's offering by sending fire from heaven and consuming it completely. The people threw themselves down on their faces. (1 Kings 18:36-39)	The Lord accepted Moses and Aaron's offering by sending fire from heaven and consuming it completely. The people threw themselves down on their faces. (Lev. 9:22-24)
By Elijah's authority 3 000 idolatrous prophets were slain (1 Kings 18:40)	By Moses' authority 3 000 idolaters were slain (Exod. 32:25-29)
After killing the prophets of Ba'al Elijah climbed Carmel to pray. (1 Kings 18:42)	After killing the idolaters Moses climbed Sinai to pray (Exod. 32:30)

Went without food for forty days and forty nights (1 Kings 19:8)	Went without food for forty days and forty nights (Exod. 34:38; Deut. 9:9)
Elijah (re)commissioned at Horeb (=Sinai) (1 Kings 19)	Moses commissioned at Sinai (Exod. 3)
Elijah was in "the cave" on Horeb (=Sinai) when the Lord "passed by" (1 Kings 19: 9-11)	Moses was hidden "in the cleft of the rock" when the Lord passed by Sinai. (Exod. 33:21-23)
Elijah saw storm, wind, an earthquake and fire upon Horeb (=Sinai). (1 Kings 19:11-12)	Moses saw storm, wind, an earthquake and fire upon Sinai. (Exod. 19:16-20; 20:18; Deut. 4:11; 5:22-27).
Prayed that he might die. (1 Kings 19:1-4)	Prayed that he might die. (Num. 11:10-15).
The Lord brought down fire from heaven upon his enemies. (2 Kings 1:9-12)	The Lord brought down fire from heaven upon those who rebelled against him. (Num. 16; cf. Lev. 10:1-3)
Elijah parted the waters of the Jordan by striking the waters with his cloak and passed over on dry ground. (2 Kings 2:8)	Moses parted the waters of the Red Sea by stretching out his staff and passed over on dry ground. (Exod. 14:16, 21-22)
His successor was one who had served him and came to resemble him in many ways, parting the waters of the Jordan as he had. ( 2 Kings 2)	His successor was one who had served him and came to resemble him in many ways, parting the waters of the Jordan as he had the Red Sea. (Josh. 3)
Was taken to be with the Lord in the Transjordan. (2 Kings 2:9-11)	Died in the Transjordan. (Deut. 34:5)
Mysteriously translated to heaven. (2 Kings 9-18)	Died mysteriously and buried in a valley, but his burial place was unknown. (Deut. 34:6)

*(Table based upon Allison, 1993: 40-42)*

### 1) Elijah's call (17:1–6)

**1** In those dark times God raised up a light, the prophet Elijah. Reared in rugged Gilead, Elijah was a rugged individualist, a man of stern character and countenance zealous for the Lord. Elijah sought Ahab and delivered the Lord's pronouncement. In contrast to those who were not gods, whose idols Ahab ignorantly worshiped, the living Lord, who was truly Israel's God, would withhold both dew and rain for the next several years.

Already the drought had lain on the land some six months (cf. Luke 4:25; James 5:17 with 1 Kings 18:1); now the reason for it all was to be revealed to Israel's apostate leadership. The message was clear: Israel had broken the pledge of its covenantal relationship with God (Deut 11:16–17; 28:23–24; cf. Lev 26:19; 1 Kings 8:35). Therefore God was demonstrating his concern for both his people's infidelity and their folly in trusting in false fertility gods like Baal. No rain! There would not even be dew until God's authentic messenger would give the word! Unknown to Ahab, Elijah had agonized over the sin of his people and had prayed to the Lord for corrective measures to be levied on his people. Accordingly Elijah was God's logical choice.

**2–6** To impress the message and its deep spiritual implications further on Ahab and all Israel, God sent Elijah into seclusion. Not only would Ahab's frantic search for the prophet be thwarted, but Elijah's very absence would be living testimony of a divine displeasure (cf. Ps 74:1, 9). Moreover Elijah himself had much to learn, and the time of solitude would furnish needed moments of divine instruction.

Obedying God's directions implicitly, Elijah walked the fifteen miles from Jezreel eastward to the Jordan River (v.5). There in Kerith, one of the Jordan's many narrow gorges, Elijah took up his residence. Alone and

relying solely on divine provision, Elijah was nourished by the available water of Kerith and by ravens sent from God (v.6).

## Notes

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1 The name Elijah means “Yah is my God.” The designation “the Tishbite” is uncertain. The NIV, following the RSV (cf. LXX), interprets it as a place name in Gilead. Since Byzantine times Listib, eight miles north of the Jabbok River, in the area of the shore of Mar Ilyas, has been suggested as Elijah’s town. A Thisbe/Tisbeh in Naphtali is known from the apocryphal story of Tobit. This latter identification seems more likely since the MT (followed by the Vul.) literally reads that Elijah was merely one of the “settlers” in Gilead. Thus Elijah had probably come from Tisbeh in Naphtali and had taken up residence among the settlers in Gilead. Dennison (pp. 124–26) suggests plausibly that Elijah’s family had been displaced to Gilead during the Aramean Wars of Baasha’s time.

The phrase “neither dew nor rain” is reminiscent of David’s lament over Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam 1:21). The importance of these words to the reputation of Baal can be seen in Danel’s lament over Aqhat in the Ugaritic literature (see ANET, p. 153).

By “rain” was meant the regular early and latter rain of October/November and March/ April. Their loss would be a mark of God’s disfavor (see EBC, 2:253–54). The dew (often falling as heavy as drizzle in some regions of Palestine) was also a sign of God’s favor to his covenant people (Deut 33:28; Prov 19:12). However it could be withdrawn from a thankless and apostate people (Hos 14:5; Hag 1:10). How good and pleasant it is when a grateful and obedient people willingly serve God in oneness of heart. Such service becomes as refreshing to God as the dew (Pss 110:3; 133:1, 3).

4 Various suggestions repoint the MT’s עֲרָבִים (‘*or<sup>e</sup>hîm*, “ravens”) in some other way so as to yield something like “merchants” or “Arabs”; all are needless concessions to antisupernaturalism. God’s miracles do not need to be buttressed with rationalistic facade.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Patterson, R. D., & Austel, H. J. (1988). 1, 2 Kings. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 4: 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job* (F. E. Gaebelin, Ed.) (137–139). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.