

***STUDIES
IN THE
LIFE OF
ELIJAH***

STUDIES 1 - 10

STUDENT MANUAL

Stephen Nemeth Lectures

Studies In The Life Of Elijah

Studies 1 - 10

Student Manual

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ELIJAH, THE MAN AND HIS MINISTRY

STUDY 1

Scripture Portions: 1 Kings 16:28-34; 1 Kings 17:1; James 5:17-18

Elijah was a mighty man of God - in some respects the greatest of all the prophets since Moses and until the advent of John the Baptist.

Matthew 11:11 -

Although he lived 3,000 years ago and his period of ministry was comparatively short, he is by no means a forgotten character.

Malachi 4:5 -

Matthew 11:14 -

Matthew 27:47 -

Luke 1:17 -

John 1:21 -

As we study his life and ministry, the Holy Spirit will teach us valuable lessons which will enable us to live for and serve the Lord more effectively.

Elijah's sudden appearance upon the page of scripture centres upon the tremendous announcement he made to Ahab. Compare -

1 Kings 17:1 -

James 5:17-18 -

However, before we look more closely at this remarkable man, let us suggest several classes of people to whom this series of studies will make a special appeal.

First, those who feel their sphere of service is hard.

If this is you, the story of Elijah should bring great encouragement.

Second, those who feel they are lone workers.

How easily such are tempted to say, as Elijah said, "I only am left!" There is encouragement here for them.

Third, those whose patience is sorely tried and who see few results.

Elijah knew all about this! The story of his patience, endurance and ultimate achievement will encourage us to 'press on'.

Fourth, those who feel there is little they can do to influence an apostate age.

There was little that Elijah could do, but how much it was.

James 5:17-18 -

We, likewise, have been given this weapon of All-prayer.

Fifth, those who have failed (and who has not?).

The story of Elijah contains one sad incident - **1 Kings 19** - but what help we find in it!

ELIJAH WAS A MAN JUST LIKE OURSELVES.

We tend to regard men like Elijah, Moses, Daniel, and the other Old Testament 'worthies' as men who walked on heights inaccessible to us. But who was Elijah?

James 5:17 -

Elijah was a man with a nature just like yours and mine. A man, not an angel. A man who, at one point, failed badly. A great man, yes, but essentially no different from ourselves.

2. WE ARE TOLD NOTHING ABOUT ELIJAH'S EARLY LIFE AND UP-BRINGING.

He is described as "Elijah the Tishbite.....of the inhabitants of Gilead". As his name means "God is my strength", this may indicate that he had godly parents. We can be sure, however, that God had been preparing him all through his early years.

And remember, every experience through which the Lord leads us is a preparation for the further work He has in store for us. Waiting time is never wasted time.

3. ELIJAH LIVED IN A DAY OF SPIRITUAL DECLENSION AND APOSTASY.

A succession of seven wicked kings had reigned over Israel.

Jeroboam.

1 Kings 12:28-33 -

b. Nadab.

1 Kings 15:25-26 -

3. Baasha.

1 Kings 15:27-28 -

d. Elah, a drunkard and a murderer.

1 Kings 16:8-9 -

e. Zimri, guilty of treason.

1 Kings 16:20 -

6. Omri.

1 Kings 16:25-26 -

g. Ahab, with whom must be linked his notoriously wicked wife, Jezebel.

1 Kings 16:28-33 -

Worship of the true God had all but ceased. Baal-worship had become the national religion. Only 7,000 Israelites remained true in heart to the Lord, and these were fearful and had hidden their testimony.

1 Kings 19:18 -

A floodtide of idolatry, superstition and evil had overwhelmed the nation. Never had God's favoured nation sunk so low spiritually and morally.

4. ELIJAH WAS COMMISSIONED BY GOD TO PERFORM SOME VERY DIFFICULT TASKS.

These included -

1. announcing the drought to Ahab.

1 Kings 17:1 -

2. *challenging Ahab and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel - 1 Kings 18:1-41.*
- c. *declaring God's righteous judgment upon Ahab and Jezebel in the matter of Naboth's vineyard - 1 Kings 21:1-29.*

How we need people of Elijah's courage today!

5. ELIJAH'S LIFE WAS MARKED BY COMPLETE SEPARATION FROM THE EVIL AROUND HIM.

A good motto over his life would be -

Ephesians 5:11 -And with it -

2 Corinthians 6:14-16 -

How could Elijah have any fellowship with the apostate leaders of Israel? His separation from the evil around him was uncompromising.

Hebrews 13:13 -

6. ELIJAH'S MINISTRY WAS CHARACTERIZED BY THE SUPERNATURAL.

Consider God's might acts in and through him.

1. fed by ravens at the brook -

1 Kings 17:1-6 -

- b. the widow's meal and oil replenished - 1 Kings 17:8-16.*
3. her son raised - 1 Kings 17:17-23.
- d. fire from heaven -

1 Kings 18:36-38 -

5. fed by an angel -

1 Kings 19:5-7 -

- f. more fire from heaven -*

2 Kings 1:9-12 -

7. dividing the waters of Jordan -

2 Kings 2:8 -

- h. raptured into the presence of God by a whirlwind -*

2 Kings 2:11 -

7. ELIJAH LIVED CONSCIOUSLY IN GOD'S PRESENCE AND RELIED UPON

GOD'S STRENGTH.

1 Kings 17:1 -

His God was the living God; the covenant God (“the Lord God of Israel”): the God “before whom I stand” as His servant. Compare -

1 Kings 10:8 -

Luke 1:19 -

Now read -

Isaiah 40:28-31 -

2 Timothy 4:17 -

What was Elijah’s secret? Was it not that, by communion and prayer, he really did know the Lord? May we emulate this great man!

Closing thought:

Daniel 11:32 -

NOTES

NOTES

HIDDEN BY THE BROOK CHERITH

STUDY 2

Scripture Portions: 1 Kings 17:2-7; Psalm 34:1-10

The announcement to Ahab that there would be no rain -

1 Kings 17:1 -

was a terrible one for Elijah to have to make. Yet he had prayed that it might not rain -

James 5:17 -

Some might ask: Was this not a cruel prayer? Did Elijah not realize the suffering and loss of life that would ensue?

The answer is that Elijah was only praying for God to honour His own word.

Deutonomy 11:16-17 -

More terrible than the judgment itself would be for God not to do what He had said. Thus Elijah, knowing God's mind, prayed for a fulfilling of His word, and spoke boldly to Ahab. The Lord then graciously sent him away to a quiet place to experience -

Psalm 91:1 -

to the full (and, indeed, the whole psalm).

This story of Elijah revolves around two God-given commands.

(1) "Go, HIDE thyself....".

This was the private aspect of his life and service. The going "in"-

John 10:9 -

the "prayer" ministry -

Acts 6:4 -

(2) "Go, SHOW thyself....".

This was the public aspect of his service. The going "out"-

John 10:9 -

the "preaching" ministry -

Acts 6:4 -

Why did God send him to Cherith?

First: to guard him when the time of reaction set in, as it almost always does after a time of ordeal or special service.

Second: to prepare him for further service. He would learn still more about dependence upon God, complete trust in Him, patience and humility - which all of us need to learn!

Third: because in a time of spiritual apostasy, God always withdraws His prophets.

Psalm 74:7-9 -

Isaiah 30:20 -

Amos 8:11-12 -

Thus Elijah was to be one of God's hidden ones.

Compare -

Psalm 83:3 -

Now notice from -

1 Kings 17:2-7 -

THE VOICE THAT HE HEARD.

1 Kings 17:1 -

How we need to hear God's voice!

Matthew 4:4 -

Elijah clearly lived in such close communion with Him that, when the Lord spoke, at once he heard.

Isaiah 6:8 -

Notice, too, that "the word of the Lord came unto him", bringing explicit instructions. There was no striving. As Elijah walked with the Lord, His plan and purpose were

clearly revealed. Compare -

Psalm 37:23 -

Proverbs 3:5-6 -

Proverbs 16:3 (A.V.) - *Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

How God spoke, we are not told, but we do know He speaks His word.

Psalm 119:105 -

by a deep peace in our hearts concerning the way forward -

Colossians 3:15 -

by circumstances and open doors -

Revelation 3:8 -

The instructions to Elijah in -

1 Kings 17:3 -

were clear and precise, and they demanded action. Elijah was left in no doubt as to what God wanted him to do. So it should, and may, be with us. Now notice -

THE PROMISE THAT HE RECEIVED.

1 Kings 17:4 -

With God's command will come His promise - always.

The promise was certain - "it shall be".

It was sufficient - God's supply always is.

- c. It was conditional. God says, "If you will....., I will.....", or "I will.....if you.....". The important word in **verse 4** is the word "there".

“Elijah, if you want the water and the food, you must go there -- into the place of My choice.”

Are you “there”, in the place of God’s will? For “there” is the place of God’s provision. Compare -

Psalm 23:1 -

Psalm 34:10 -

Luke 22:35 -

Philippians 4:19 -

Elijah was determined to get “there” -

1 Kings 17:5 -

THE OBEDIENCE THAT HE SHOWED.

“So he went” -

1 Kings 17:5 -

There is nothing so precious to the Lord as our obedience. What about our love? Well, read -

John 14:15 -

Elijah’s obedience was -

(1) active - “he went.....he did.....”.

(2) instant.

(3) complete - “.....according to the word of the Lord”.

(4) unquestioning. There is no record that he questioned how ravens could bring food or how a brook could keep running in time of drought. He fully obeyed.

John 2:5 -

Acts 9:6 -

4. THE SUPPLY THAT HE ENJOYED.

1. The SOURCE was God Himself -

1 Kings 17:1 4 -

He is sovereign. He controls nature.

2. The METHOD was miraculous. The brook kept running. The ravens were God's errand boys!
- c.* ***The REGULARITY was consistent.*** "Morning and evening"-without fail!
4. The VARIETY showed God's grace. "Bread and flesh.....".
5. The SUFFICIENCY - there was enough until God's purpose was fulfilled.

God is still the same! He can still employ anything or anyone to meet the needs of His people.

He will never fail those whose trust is in Him, those who are "there".

5. THE TESTING THAT HE EXPERIENCED.

1 Kings 17:7 -

The words, "after a little while", mean literally, "at the end of days", that is, "when God's purpose has been fulfilled". When God's purpose was fulfilled, "the brook dried up", but God remained!

Has your brook dried up? Has your health failed? Have your loved ones been taken.....your finances become low? Why has this happened? Does God not care? Of course He does!

1. He is leading us ON. He is working to a program in your life and mine.
2. He wants us to have sympathy for OTHERS. Elijah must “feel” for the people who were starving.

2 Corinthians 1:4 -

- c.* ***He wants us to TRUST Him.*** This is why He allows the brooks to dry up - so that we shall find our all in HIM and lean, not upon His gifts and provisions, but upon Himself.

*“Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
More than all IN THEE I find.....”*

Closing Thought:

Psalm 91:1-2 -

NOTES

IN THE WIDOW'S HOUSE AT ZAREPHATH

STUDY 3

Scripture Portion: 1 Kings 17:8-16

There are three matters that constantly exercise God's people.

The **first** has to do with God's guidance. "Does God guide?", we ask. In these studies we see clearly that He does. Elijah was divinely led, one step at a time.

Psalm 37:23 -

The **second** matter has to do with God's discipline. Why do troubles and trials come to the Christian? Study **Deuteronomy, chapter 8**, and **Hebrews 12:3-11**. See also the answer to your questionings in the incident before us.

The **third** matter has to do with God's provision.

Genesis 22:14 -

"Jehovah-jireh" means "The Lord will provide. Will He? Does He today? This study supplies the answer to that question.

After Elijah had been at the brook Cherith for about a year, it dried up. Did that mean God had failed? No, it meant God was about to lead him on. Where to? To Zarephath, where He had commanded a widow to sustain him. Read **1 Kings 17:8-16** several times and notice -

1. THE WIDOW'S UNRELIEVED DISTRESS.

We do not know how long she had been a widow, but we are told she had one son. Probably she had been well provided for, but now she was suffering as a result of the drought. We are told that:

She had come to the end of her resources.

1 Kings 17:10 -

1 Kings 17:12 -

She was about to take her last meal with her son. Have you come to the end of your resources? Have your money, health, friends, patience, etc., all gone? Take comfort from this story and from -

Psalm 84:11-12 -

She was a believer, and yet the Lord allowed her distress.

1 Kings 17:12 -

He knew all about her extremity, as -

1 Kings 17:9 -

assures us. But, He was working out His purpose for her as well as for Elijah. He was causing -

Romans 8:28 -

to be true of her, and also -

Psalm 138:8 -

If you are experiencing trouble, it does not mean that the Lord has forgotten you.

She had lost hope.

1 Kings 17:12 -

She thought she was preparing her last meal before she and her son died! Why did she lose hope? Because her eyes were upon the barrel and the little cruse of oil instead of upon the Lord.

If we pin our faith to anything down here, we shall certainly lose hope and our faith will falter. But, if we put our faith in God He will never fail us.

Isaiah 41:10 -

2. THE PROPHET'S UNDAUNTED FAITH.

Any man of smaller faith would have faltered and failed when the brook dried up, but not Elijah! His faith was evident in that:

1. He had faith to take God at His word.

1 Kings 17:8-10 -

Elijah lived on the word of the Lord, as we should.

Matthew 4:4 -

Compare -

1 Kings 17:8 -

1 Kings 17:14 -

1 Kings 17:16 -

When our actions are regulated by the Word of God and our lives are lived in the centre of His will, we have nothing whatsoever to fear. Elijah's faith was very strong, as was Abraham's.

Romans 4:17-21 -

b. He had faith to make an unusual request.

This is recorded in -

1 Kings 17:13 -

How strange that he should say to this poverty-stricken widow, "Make me thereof a little cake first"! What does this mean? It means that he was standing before her as God's representative and that he was telling her to put God first. This principle is clearly brought out in -

Matthew 6:31-34 -

Note particularly **verse 33**.

When we are prepared to give God the first place, we may be quite sure that our provision is guaranteed.

3. He had faith to declare God's faithfulness.

1 Kings 17:14 -

Appearances were all against him, but Elijah had the word of the Lord upon which to rest. Faith is simply taking God at His word. Thus, he was able to tell this woman that, because God had said He would provide, He would provide. Notice the lovely word to her in -

1 Kings 17:13 -

“Fear Not.....!” The Lord says that to us over and over again! “Christian, fear not!”

3. THE LORD’S UNFAILING SUPPLY.

1 Kings 17:15-16 -

From these verses we see that, as the woman obeyed the Lord, the supply was given.

Are you concerned about the matter of supply? Have you a pressing financial need and you wonder where the supply is coming from? Perhaps the Lord is leading you to set up home and you are wondering how you are going to provide?or you are wondering how you will be able to make ends meet when you can no longer work?

See what an old man said -

Psalm 37:25 -

Remember, God’s supplies never fail where there is faith. Compare -

Matthew 6:32 -

Philippians 4:19 -

Concerning this gracious supply that the Lord made for Elijah and the woman, notice -

1. The promise of it.

1 Kings 17:9 -

1 Kings 17:14 -

Remember that all the Lord said and did for His servant then, He is saying and waiting to do for you today.

b. The duration of it.

1 Kings 17:14 -

Notice the three important words “until the day.....”.

How long will God supply our needs? “Until the day when we shall no longer walk by faith but we shall walk by sight in His glorious presence!”

2. The sufficiency of it.

1 Kings 17:15b-16 -

It is the story all over again of -

Philippians 4:19 -

God promises to meet all our need. He never gives us too much. Often He only gives us sufficient. Read -

2 Corinthians 4:16 -

Closing Thought:

Isaiah 25:1 -

NOTES

RAISING THE WIDOW'S SON

STUDY 4

Scripture Portion: 1 Kings 17:17-24

Now that Elijah was safely installed in her home and God was daily providing for all their needs, it would have been easy for the widow of Zarephath to think that, at last, all her troubles were over. But were they?

1 Kings 17:16 -

Then compare with -

1 Kings 17:17 -

Notice that both these people, Elijah and the widow, were believers. They were living by faith, faith in God, and faith is always tested. In other words, if we are believers, we must expect to be tested.

Philippians 1:29 -

Hebrews. 12:6-11 -

Think how much testing the psalmist, the apostles, the early believers and the Puritans experienced.

Think how much God's people, on every hand, are experiencing today.

This whole matter of faith's testing is brought before us in the story of the death of the widow's son and of Elijah's great prayer. This is the record of God's loving dealings with two of His people who lived at Zarephath, which, significantly, means "a place of refining".

If we are believers, men and women of faith, we are all living at Zarephath. In other words, we must expect our faith to be tested. Notice from this incident -

THE TRIAL OF FAITH.

This is indicated in -

1 Kings 17:17 -

Notice the following about this trial.

It was UNEXPECTED.

Quite unexpectedly, the child fell sick and then died. Trials and testings come just as suddenly into the lives of God's people everywhere.

It was SEVERE.

The child not only became ill, but he died. All this happened to a woman already bereaved of her husband. God's chastenings are sometimes very severe!

c. It was PURPOSEFUL.

That is, it did not just happen by chance. "Fate" was not in operation here! The Lord allowed this to happen. Notice the words in **1 Kings 17:17** - "*.....it came to pass after these things.....*" In other words, God was in it all. This thing was from Him.

1 Kings 12:24 -

He was putting into action -

Romans 8:28 -

It all seemed very strange - but read the following -

1 Peter 4:12 -

1 Peter 1:7 -

All that happened was with God's loving permission and in order to fulfil His purpose. It is just the same in our lives.

THE COLLAPSE OF FAITH.

What happens when faith is tested. See what happened here -

1 Kings 17:18 -

When her child died the widow turned on Elijah and reproached him and even blamed him for her son's death. Her faith temporarily collapsed. For a short while she became an unbeliever.

God's people often react like this in times of trial and testing. They ask, "Does God care? What have I done to deserve this? Why has it happened to me?"

But notice another thing: when her faith was tested, she remembered her sin. It is a good thing when God's chastenings cause us to search our hearts and cleanse our ways.

Psalm 139:23-24 -

Lamentations 3:40 -

God allowed the trial to fall upon the widow in order that she might be purified as gold is purified by the process of refining.

Job 23:10 -

1 Peter 1:7 -

How different was Elijah's reaction!

Psalm 119:75 -

He could not understand the reason for this sudden tragedy any more than the woman could. But see how his faith came into operation in this time of testing.

3. THE OPERATION OF FAITH.

Whereas the woman's faith collapsed, Elijah's faith went into action! It began to work.

James 2:17-20 -

How did it work? How does faith operate in a time of crisis?

1. It keeps calm when the blow falls.

Look at Elijah. Although he is deeply moved because of what has happened, he is trusting God in spite of it. See how gentle and calm he is under provocation.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 -

He did not reproach God. He was calm when the test came.

b. It trusts God when His purpose cannot be traced.

Elijah could not see what God was doing, but he knew it was for some wise and loving purpose. So, he was willing to trust God until He revealed it.

3. It at once relates the trial to God.

Elijah took the child, went to his room, got down before the Lord and related the whole situation to Him.

1 Kings 17:19-20 -

What a great act of faith that was! Elijah's faith led him to the throne of grace and to the God of grace.

1 John 5:5 -

d. It asks God to do the humanly impossible.

1 Kings 17:21 -

Compare with -

James 5:13-15 -

Elijah knew the mind of the Lord when He prayed thus. God does not always lead us to pray for resurrection. When our loved one is seriously ill, it may be easier to pray for healing than to trust God for bereavement.

4. It is always honoured by God, and is thus victorious.

1 Kings 17:22-23 -

Compare with -

Matthew 9:29 -

Faith (not presumption) will never be disappointed. If the Lord leads you to trust Him along a certain line or about a certain matter, you will never be disappointed.

Romans 10:11 -

4. THE FRUIT OF FAITH.

1 Kings 17:23 -

Elijah gave the resurrected child back to his mother, as if to say, “See what God has done!” Now read -

1 Kings 17:24 -

When she saw what God had done through the channel of Elijah’s faith, her own faith was revived and restored. This is the fruit of faith.

When we trust God, many things happen! He is glorified, our own faith is strengthened, our character is purified and the genuineness of our faith is proved. Best of all, others are helped and strengthened through our trusting God in a time of crisis.

As other people look at us in times of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, profit and loss, especially in times of fierce trial, of bereavement, accident or illness, can they say of us -

1 Kings 17:24 -

Closing Thought:

Psalm 119:75 -

NOTES

THE CHALLENGE ON MOUNT CARMEL

STUDY 5

Scripture Portion: 1 Kings 18:17-40

The Holy Spirit has certainly led the writer to give us a vivid and dramatic record of Elijah's great challenge on Mount Carmel. Elijah is there in the presence of Ahab, the 450 prophets of Baal, 400 prophets of the groves and a company of people from all Israel.

The question was: Is Baal the real God? Or is Jehovah the true God and is Elijah His servant?

No one present that day was left in any doubt as to the answer to these questions when "the fire of the Lord fell....."

1 Kings 18:38 -

The biblical records are actual history. In **1 Kings 18:17-40**, we read of fact, not fiction. The whole story is intensely dramatic. What a great God we have!

Perhaps the most important value of the incident, however, is that it is permanently challenging. The lessons of the incident abide. What are they?

Let us answer this question by asking: What is the greatest need in the Church today? Is it for men, money, machinery or methods? No! What did Elijah need? He needed evidence that God was alive and active so that the people would believe on Him and turn to Him. Now read -

1 Kings 18:23-24 -

1 Kings 18:38-39 -

He needed fire, and that is what we need today - fire, the symbol, evidence and manifestation of God's presence and power.

Compare -

Exodus 3:2 -

Exodus 13:21 -

Exodus 19:18 -

Leveticus 9:24 -

1 Chronicles 21:26 -

2 Chronicles 7:1 -

Isaiah 4:4 -

Luke 3:16 -

Acts 2:3-4 -

Hebrews 12:29 -

What we need is the burning, consuming, illuminating and empowering fire of the Holy Ghost to fall upon us and upon the work that God has committed to us.

How can we obtain this fire?

1 Kings 18:38 -

What are the antecedents of this “then”? For it is clear that the fire of God only falls when all His requirements are met. When did it fall?

In answering this, we shall use an outline suggested by the late Canon Guy H. King.

IT WAS WHEN THE ALTAR WAS REPAIRED.

1 Kings 18:30 -

The very first thing Elijah did in preparation for the coming of the fire was to repair the altar of the Lord. Idolatry and apostasy had been prevalent for so long that God’s altars had been broken down. Elijah now engaged in the work of repair. What is the significance of this for us?

Surely, that the fire of the Lord only falls (in the life, the church or the work that He has committed to us to do for Him) when the Lord is given His rightful place. Has the Lord His rightful place in your life and in all you are seeking to do in His name?

Colossians 1:18 -

Who is upon the throne - the Lord Jesus or self? Who is first in your life - a friend, a

loved one or the Lord Himself?

2. IT WAS WHEN THE SACRIFICE WAS OFFERED.

1 Kings 18:33 -

The sacrifice was a bullock which Elijah cut up and placed, piece by piece, upon the altar. Compare -

Romans 12:1 -

Romans 6:13 -

Ask yourself: How many of the pieces of my life have I really offered to the Lord upon the altar? How many of my members are yielded fully to Him “as instruments of righteousness unto God”? What about my hands, feet, eyes, ears, lips, my home, job, pleasures and friendships? Have I yielded all the “pieces” or “members” to Him?

3. IT WAS WHEN THE WATER WAS Poured.

1 Kings 18:33-35 -

The pagan priests were notorious for their trickery in deceiving the people with false signs and lying wonders. Elijah was preparing to offset this. So, after placing the pieces of sacrifice upon the altar, he drenched both altar and sacrifice with water, not only once or twice, but three times until -

1 Kings 18:35 -

What things do we substitute for the fire of the Lord? Are we proud of our lovely churches, organs, choirs, dazzling oratory, good collections, etc.? What are any of these without the power of Pentecost?

4. IT WAS WHEN THE PRAYER WAS MADE.

1 Kings 18:36-37 -

Elijah was a man of prayer. It was the habit of his life. He did not only pray when he was in trouble.

James 5:16-18 -

Read **1 Kings 18:36-37** several times. Notice when, where and how he prayed.

The one all-embracing condition which must be met if God's fire is to fall is - prayer, more prayer and yet more prayer. If we will really pray, sooner or later, the fire will fall - in our lives and in our work for the Lord.

4. IT WAS WHEN THE MOTIVE WAS PURGED.

It has been suggested that there is a change in Elijah's praying between **verses 36** and **37**. In **verse 36**, Elijah prayed for the fire that all might know "that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word", but, in **verse 37** the change came. He prayed "that his people may know that Thou are the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again".

Why do we want the fire of the Lord to fall, to be empowered for service and to be filled with the Holy Ghost? Do we want it for ourselves? It is only when our motive is that God should be glorified and His Name honoured and exalted that the fire of the Lord will fall.

These are the prerequisites to Pentecost, to an outpouring of that consuming fire of the Holy Ghost. Let us pray that, throughout our land and around the world, the fire of the Lord may fall.

Closing Thought:

Isaiah 4:3-5 -

NOTES

A SOUND OF ABUNDANCE OF RAIN

STUDY 6

Scripture Portions: 2 Kings 18:41-46; James 5:16-18

When Elijah told Ahab that there was “a sound of abundance of rain”, there had, as yet, been no sound audible to the human ear. Elijah had only heard this sound by the hearing of faith. Read and compare -

Galatians 3:2 -

Psalm 25:14 -

Amos 3:7 -

Acts 22:9 -

1 Kings 18 records two prayers that Elijah prayed: one was in public - for fire -

1 Kings 18:36-37 -

the other was in private - for water -

1 Kings 18:42-46 -

In this study we shall look at Elijah on the mountain top, alone with God and praying for the showers to be poured out upon the thirsty land. What kind of prayer was this prayer?

IT WAS A PRAYER OF FAITH, FOR IT RESTED UPON GOD’S OWN SURE PROMISE.

When we pray we need to make sure that our petition is founded upon the promise of God so that we are praying in accordance with His will. Without such a promise we may well demand things contrary to His will, which will therefore be presumptuous and not the prayer of faith at all.

For 3 ½ years, there had been no rain. Now Elijah goes before the Lord and asks Him to send the rain. Upon what ground did he make this prayer? - upon the ground of God’s own sure promise.

1 Kings 18:1 -

God had said to Elijah, “I will send rain.....”. Now Elijah asked Him to do that which was clearly His will.

Answers to prayer are conditional upon our praying in accordance with God's will. We can know His will. Be sure of it, for He reveals it by His Word and by the Holy Spirit. Read and compare -

1 John 5:14-15 -

Romans 8:26-27 -

Why did Elijah need to pray for rain if it was God's will to send it? Because God had ordained it thus. Read **Ezekiel 36:24-38**, where the Lord promises to do a great many things, and then, in **verse 37**, He says that He will do them in answer to prayer.

IT WAS A PRAYER OFFERED IN THE SECRET PLACE, AWAY FROM THE NOISE AND DISTRACTIONS OF THE WORLD.

1 Kings 18:42 -

What a relief for Elijah to get alone in the presence of God after all the noise and excitement he had experienced!

Psalm 46:10 -

But there is more to note here. The Lord Jesus frequently acted upon His own words in -

Matthew 6:6 -

Luke 6:12 -

Prayer can accomplish so very much. How much? Ask James -

James 5:16-18 -

IT WAS A PRAYER WHICH WAS MARKED BY DEEP REVERENCE AND SINCERE HUMILITY.

1 Kings 18:42 -

Earlier in the chapter, we see Elijah standing amid the crowds on Carmel. Now we see him before his God, down upon the earth with his face between his knees. We need to be filled with a new realization of the majesty and holiness of God and of our own littleness and sinfulness.

Compare -

Genesis 18:27 -

Isaiah 6:1-5 -

Daniel 10:8 -

1 Peter 5:5-6 -

We may come before the Lord with holy boldness -

Hebrews 4:16 -

But we must always come reverently and in deep humility.

IT WAS A PRAYER WHICH WAS DEFINITE AND TO THE POINT.

Zechariah 10:1 -

This is exactly what Elijah did. He only had one petition as he came before the Lord. "Lord, send the rain! Send the rain! Send the rain!" In the Upper Room they prayed for only one thing - the coming of the promised Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:13-14 -

When Peter was in prison, the church prayed for only one thing - his deliverance.

Acts 12:5 -

Luke 11:5 -

Luke 11:11-13 -

Definite, specific prayers bring definite, specific answers!

5. IT WAS A PRAYER WHICH WAS INTENSE, EARNEST AND FERVENT.

Notice the words “fervent” and “earnestly” in -

James 5:16-18 -

Compare with -

Hebrews 5:7 -

Elijah’s prayer was also accompanied by fasting.

1 Kings 18:41-42 -

He could quite legitimately have joined Ahab in taking food and drink, but he did not do so.

Matthew 17:19-21 -

Do we know anything about fasting? Do we know what it is to sacrifice time, pleasures and legitimate things in order to “pray through” and secure God’s blessing?

5. IT WAS A PRAYER WHICH WAS ACCOMPANIED BY WATCHFULNESS.

Colossians 4:2 -

Psalm 130:5-6 -

Now read -

1 Kings 18:43-45 -

When we really pray in faith we should already be looking for the answer; even if time and again the reply is, “There is nothing.....”, we should go on praying and watching until the answer comes.

Would his servant ever forget it? But this also reminds us of one other characteristic of Elijah’s prayer.

6. IT WAS A PRAYER WHICH PERSEVERED UNTIL THE ANSWER CAME.

Elijah said to his servant, "Go again.....again.....again.....seven times!"
George Muller prayed for 52 years for two of his friends. How such perseverance shames us! Notice, even Elijah's prayer was not answered immediately.

Compare -

Genesis 32:26 -

Psalm 40:1 -

Then we read -

1 Kings 18:45a -

The kind of prayer which is described here and which God invites us to offer, is always answered abundantly.

1 Kings 18:45b -

*Christian, seek not yet repose.
Hear thy gracious Saviour say;
Thou art in the midst of foes:
Watch and pray.*

*Watch, as if on that alone
Hung the issue of the day;
Pray, that help may be sent down:
Watch and pray.*

Closing Thought:

Mark 11:22-24 -

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WHAT DOES THOU HERE, ELIJAH?

STUDY 7

Scripture Portion: 1 Kings 19:1-18

Our studies thus far have shown Elijah to be a man of deep devotion, unquestioning obedience and daring faith. But then there comes a chapter describing breakdown, humiliating failure and defeat - **1 Kings, chapter 19**. A sad chapter - yet, so up-to-date and applicable to our own experience. "A man just like ourselves!"

James 5:17 -

Do you ever get discouraged, depressed and despondent?
Do you ever find yourself in the grip of despair?
Does fear ever possess you?
Does doubt assail you?
Do you ever experience loneliness and a feeling that nobody understands?
Do you ever feel at the end of your tether?
Do you ever go to sleep and wish you need not wake up?

1. NOTICE THE DESPERATE CONDITION IN WHICH ELIJAH FOUND HIMSELF.

He was suddenly gripped by fear and alarm.

Is this the courageous man of -

1 Kings 18:17-18 -

1 Kings 18:40 -

the same man of which -

1 Kings 19:2-3 -

speaks? Elijah - running for his life!

Fear is a dreadful thing, which we have all experienced in some measure.

He was unable to bear the presence of his servant.

1 Kings 19:3 -

This verse tells us of Elijah's self-imposed isolation. When we are over-strained, even the presence of friends and loved ones can irritate us.

He was overwhelmed with depression, despondency and despair.

1 Kings 19:4 -

Poor Elijah! - sitting under a juniper tree - at "Wit's End Corner"! Have you been like that? Are you under the juniper tree now?

Psalm 42:11 -

Psalm 43:5 -

He was presumptuous and unwise in his praying.

1 Kings 19:4 -

He felt as the psalmist did in -

Psalm 55:3-8 -

e. He was filled with self-pity.

1 Kings 19:4 -.

This is always a dangerous state to get into.

6. He had an unbalanced view of things.

1 Kings 19:10 -

1 Kings 19:14 -

1 Kings 19:18 -

In times of overstrain and illness, everything gets out of perspective. Little problems become greatly exaggerated in our minds.

g. He temporarily lost his faith in God.

He still believed in God, but he could not trust Him in this emergency, so he “went to pieces”.

There is little doubt that Elijah was experiencing a nervous breakdown. We are all subject, in greater or lesser degree, to some, or all, of the above-mentioned emotions or reactions.

When one is in a normal state of health, such experiences are only very temporary. But when they persist and all come together, as with Elijah, then we are in a bad way. Is there no deliverance from these disturbing experiences which, if not checked, will lead to breakdown?

There certainly is.

It is most important that, in this “high-speed” age, we learn the secret of wise living and thus avoid the emotional upsets which result from unwise living.

2. NOTICE HOW ELIJAH GOT INTO THIS CONDITION OF DEPRESSION AND BREAKDOWN.

1. He was **MENTALLY** overstrained.

For 3 ½ years he had experienced terrific tension, culminating in the great victory on Mount Carmel and the slaughter of the priests - **1 Kings, chapter 18**. Is it to be wondered that he was exhausted mentally and nervously?

b. He was PHYSICALLY exhausted.

Not only had the experiences of the past years made heavy demands upon his body, but now he had just taken an 18-mile cross-country run!

3. He was **SPIRITUALLY** out-of-touch.

1 Kings 19:2-3 -

Particularly notice the words, “when he saw that.....” and compare -

Matthew 14:30 -

Elijah took his eyes off the Lord and looked at his circumstances - the threats of Jezebel.

If you want to be depressed, fearful, filled with self-pity, etc., take your eyes off the Lord and look at your circumstances, the problems of this weary world. Just take a good look

at yourself!

These were the three reasons for Elijah's collapse. He was sick mentally, physically and spiritually. These must be considered together, for the mental affects the spiritual, the physical affects the mental - and so on.

3. NOTICE HOW ELIJAH WAS DEALT WITH BY THE DIVINE PHYSICIAN AND THE CURE THAT WAS PRESCRIBED FOR HIM THAT SET HIM ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY.

1. Elijah was physically exhausted, so the Lord attended to the needs of his BODY.

Psalm 103:14 -

God prescribed food, sleep and plenty of fresh air.

1 Kings 19:5-7 -

He gave His servant a six-weeks' holiday! It is essential that we pay attention to these three simple rules for bodily health.

- (1) nourishing food, regularly taken.
- (2) regular and sufficient sleep.
- (3) fresh air, exercise and relaxation.

b. Elijah was mentally overstrained, so the Lord dealt with his MIND.

His mental outlook was distorted and unbalanced. So after six weeks of rest and care, good feeding and fresh air, the Lord came to him and repeated His question -

1 Kings 19:9 -

1 Kings 19:13 -

His object was to cause Elijah to face realities - to face up to his fears and problems and to look them squarely in the face.

2. Elijah was out-of-touch spiritually, so the Lord dealt with his SOUL.

He gave him a wonderful vision of His power, glory and tenderness.

Compare -

1 Kings 19:11-12 -

Psalm 46:10 -

Elijah needed physical restoration and mental renewal, but most of all, spiritual revival. Most wonderful of all, the Lord did not accuse Elijah of his failure, but, when He restored him, He recommissioned him.

1 Kings 19:15 -

Closing Thought:

Psalm 27:13 -

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THE STORY OF NABOTH'S VINEYARD

STUDY 8

Scripture Portions: 1 Kings 21:1-29; 2 Kings 9:30-37

This solemn story reveals two things of which we need to be reminded constantly, which are always true but which we so quickly forget.

First - God is sovereign, all-powerful and infinitely holy, and that He hates sin.

Romans 1:18 -

Second - Man is wicked, wilful and deserving of God's wrath.

Colossians 3:5-6 -

As you read **1 Kings 21**, ask yourself: What does this chapter tell me about God and about men and women?

Five personalities are brought before us in this story. Notice how each of them acted in this terrible drama.

AHAB'S SELFISH DEMAND.

1 Kings 21:1-2 -

Ahab, king of Israel, was very wealthy. But all his possessions did not satisfy him. He coveted the vineyard which belonged to Naboth. He offered to exchange or buy it. To his surprise and anger, Naboth refused.

1 Kings 21:3 -

So, what did Ahab do?

1 Kings 21:4 -

What a picture it is. A king sulking and acting like a spoiled child!

Covetousness is a dreadful sin, yet sometimes even the Lord's people sulk when they cannot have their own way!

Poor Ahab - and poor you, if you get upset because you cannot have what you want, especially if it is not what God wants!

But let us look at -

2. NABOTH'S STEADFAST REFUSAL.

When Ahab asked for the vineyard, Naboth said, "The Lord forbid it me.....".

1 Kings 21:3 -

Was this an unreasonable answer? No. The vineyard, part of his inherited property, had belonged to his ancestors for many generations. So, how could he sell it?

But it was not simply a matter of sentiment.

Leviticus 25:23 -

Numbers 36:7 -

God had expressly forbidden the sale of this property; therefore, when Ahab made his request, Naboth said "The Lord forbid it.....How can I do this thing when God has forbidden it?" So he refused to disobey God - and how great this is!

Compare -

Hebrews 11:24 -

Daniel 3:13-14 -

Acts 4:20 -

Christian, are you contemplating marriage with an unbeliever? "The Lord forbid it."

2 Corinthians 6:14 -

Are you seriously thinking of uniting in Christian service with those who do not believe the Bible: "The Lord forbid it."

2 Corinthians 6:15 -

Naboth had the courage of his convictions. It was a costly business to stand up for God,

truth and righteousness. It always is.

Compare -

1 King. 21:13 -

Psalm 37:32 -

Now notice -

3. JEZEBEL'S SINISTER PLOT.

We see this in **1 Kings 21:5-14.**

Jezebel is one of the most sinister figures in the Bible. She not only wrought great evil, but she influenced Ahab to do evil. See how she acted when she heard of Naboth's refusal. She replied with a stinging taunt.

1 Kings 21:7 -

She resorted to forgery -

1 Kings 21:8 -

Her action was filled with hypocrisy -

1 Kings 21:9 -

She pressed others into perjury -

1 Kings 21:10 -

She perpetrated the horrible act of murder -

1 Kings 21:13 -

Thus she did away with Naboth, the righteous, God-fearing man. She gained the vineyard for Ahab, and he took possession of it.

1 Kings 21:15-16 -

Her sinister plot succeeded, and a humble servant of God was stoned to death. Does this suggest that sinful men and women can defy God and get away with it? No!

1 Kings 21:16-17 -

No sooner had Jezebel completed her wicked scheme than “the word of the Lord came to Elijah”.

Compare -

Numbers 32:23 -

Notice, then -

4. GOD’S SOVEREIGN ACTION.

Ahab and Jezebel had defied the Lord, but they could not get away with it, for He is sovereign in the affairs of mankind. He always has the last word. Now He acted.

Take note of this solemn record, for this God is the God with whom we all have to do and before whom all men will stand to give account of themselves.

Romans 14:12 -

In the world there are two groups of people: those represented by Ahab and Jezebel, and those by Naboth and Elijah. The latter group is very much in the minority.

Many, like Naboth, have been martyred for their faithfulness to the Lord. Many are suffering persecution and death because they are Christians. Is the devil winning, and is the majority group in the right? No! Compare -

Matthew 7:13-14 -

Proverbs 4:18-19 -

God will yet vindicate His people and mete out judgment to those who have rebelled against Him, rejected His word and refused to humble themselves before Him.

Revelation 20:9-15 -

Revelation 21:6-8 -

God is merciful and slow to fulfil His word of judgment, but He will fulfil it.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 -

Finally, we consider Elijah himself. Notice -

5. ELIJAH'S SOLEMN TASK.

Read **1 Kings 21:17-26.**

It was a hard task for Elijah to have to pronounce Ahab's doom, and that of his posterity, and then the doom of Jezebel.

1 Kings 21:21-24 -

What should be our message in these darkening days?

Should we tell men and women that God is love? Yes!

Should we say that He is merciful? Yes!

But above all, we must declare that God is just and holy; that He hates sin; that judgment is coming upon this world; and that, if they want to escape it, they must "flee from the wrath to come," -

Matthew 3:7 -

flee to the refuge which is Christ Jesus our Lord -

Isaiah 32:2 -

The message that should be on the lips of every Christian today is -

John 3:36 -

not the first part but the second. Are you proclaiming that message?

Acts 20:27 -

In concluding this study, notice -

1 Kings 21:27-29 -

and compare with -

Ezekiel 33:11 -

How merciful the Lord is!

Closing Thought:

2 Peter 3:9-14 -

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THE HOME-GOING OF A SERVANT OF GOD

STUDY 9

Scripture Portion: 2 Kings 2:1-15

As believers -

Ephesians 1:13 -

those who are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ -

1 Peter 1:18-19 -

we have a glorious prospect. At present we live in the body, and we “groan” -

Romans 8:23 -

and long for our Heavenly Home -

John 14:1-3 -

2 Corinthians 5:1-8 -

Psalms 23:6 -

Elijah finished his earthly life by being caught up to Heaven in a whirlwind -

2 Kings 2:11 -

This story contains some valuable lessons for us.

THERE REALLY IS A LIFE TO COME.

There is a life beyond this life - death does not end all!. Even reason rejects the idea that man, created in the image of God, should live for a brief few years upon this earth, develop his personality and powers of intellect and then snuff out like a candle. But revelation, given to us in God’s Word, makes us sure.

For the Christian, death is but the entrance into a higher, fuller, better life. For the non-Christian, too, death does not end it all. Read the solemn words of -

Hebrews 9:27 -

Elijah was walking and talking with Elisha, when, suddenly “he went up by a whirlwind.....”. Where to?

2 Kings 2:1 -

2 Kings 2:11 -

But, hundreds of years later, Elijah appeared and talked to the Lord Jesus.

Mark. 9:2-4 -

So Elijah was, and is, still alive.

EVERY SERVANT OF GOD, WHOEVER HE MAY BE AND HOWEVER IMPORTANT HIS WORK, MUST EVENTUALLY REST FROM HIS LABOURS.

Even Elijah came to the end of his earthly span of service. There were very few witnesses on the earth in those days. Good men were scarce, yet Elijah had to go!

We are apt only to look at the earthly service of believers and to forget that our earthly ministry is only a preparation for our service in the ages to come!

Revelation 22:3 -

3. IN ELIJAH’S TRANSLATION, WE HAVE AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE WAY IN WHICH A GENERATION OF BELIEVERS WILL BE RAPTURED INTO HEAVEN.

2 Kings 2:11 -

tells us exactly what took place. He went to Heaven without dying. And there are millions of people who will go to be with the Lord without ever passing through the grave.

The two New Testament passages which deal with this are: -

1 Corinthians 15:51-54

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 -

Like Elijah, we may not die. Even if we do, as Elisha did -

2 Kings 13:20 -

our bodies will be raised. We shall be raptured, translated, with the living, and “so shall we ever be with the Lord”.

Many today are skeptical about this revealed truth. Even the college students of Elijah’s day were skeptical about Elijah’s translation into the presence of God. Compare -

2 Kings. 2:16-18 -

2 Peter 3:3-4 -

4. THE TIME, THE MANNER AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR HOME-GOING ARE IN THE HANDS OF OUR LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER.

Why do we emphasize this? Because Elijah, some ten years previously, had actually prayed to die.

1 Kings 19:4 -

It is a good thing that our prayers are not always answered in the way we want! They are always answered, either with God’s “Yes”, “No”, or “Wait”. When Elijah prayed to die, the answer was “No”, for God had ten more years of service for him.

Have you ever prayed to die? Remember the glorious truth of the first six words of -

Psalm 31:15 -

God’s way is always best! He knows, He loves, He cares, and He always gives the very best to His children. We shall go to be “with Christ, which is far better”, in God’s time, not a moment before and not a moment after.

Philippians 1:23 -

5. ALTHOUGH GOD TAKES AWAY HIS SERVANTS, HIS WORK GOES ON.

Immediately Elijah laid down his mantle, Elisha took it up and carried on the work. You see:

The work we do is God's work, not ours.

This is beautifully illustrated in Elisha's smiting the waters (just as Elijah had done).

2 Kings 2:8 -

2 Kings 2:14 -

and seeing God work in supernatural power, so much so, the sons of the prophets exclaimed -

2 Kings 2:15 -

Not one of us is indispensable.

We like to think we are. We say, "What would happen if I were taken?" Well, what would happen? The Lord would choose someone else to carry on His work. Indeed, He has that someone else already being prepared for the task.

6. **SOMETIMES GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE CERTAIN INDICATIONS THAT THE END OF THEIR EARTHLY COURSE IS NEAR AT HAND.**

Elijah knew that shortly the Lord would take him. Elisha also knew. So did the college students of Bethel and Jericho and those who gathered on the banks of Jordan.

2 Kings 2:3-7 -

As we grow older, we must realize that the time of our sojourning on earth is getting shorter. Also, by the law of averages, some of us who are still comparatively young and energetic, may soon have to leave this earth.

Yet others among God's people know that their days are numbered because of bodily sickness or rapidly-failing powers.

7. **WE SHOULD ANTICIPATE OUR HOME-GOING AND PREPARE ACCORDINGLY.**

We must first put our whole trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His precious blood.

Ephesians 1:6-7 -

Having done this, how should our last hours be occupied? Look at this story of Elijah for the answer.

1. It seems that he had a great desire to be alone and in solitary communion with his Lord. Three times he asked Elisha to leave him -

2 Kings 2:2-6 -

How natural to want to be alone with his Lord! Oh, Christian -

Amos 4:12 -

2. He carried on with his work just in the normal day-to-day way. It seems he just went on, one step at a time, in communion with the Lord, seeking to do His will and being ready when the call should come.
3. He was determined to do all the good he could in the short time left to him. He visited the colleges and encouraged the students.

2 Kings 2:3 -

2 Kings 2:5 -

2 Kings 2:7 -

What a ministry! Read **1 Timothy 1:1-13**.

- d. His faith and trust in God were as vital and as powerful at the end as at any time previously. Why, just before he went to Heaven, he took his mantle, divided Jordan, and passed over.*

2 Kings 2:8 -

Sometimes when God's people "retire", they get slack, but not this man!

4. He longed to leave a blessing behind him.

2 Kings 2:9 -

tells us this, the important words being, "before I be taken away from thee.....".

By God's grace, we can all leave behind us a legacy of love, of virtue and of constant Christian living.

Closing Thought:

Hebrews 6:10-12 -

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WHERE IS THE LORD GOD OF ELIJAH

STUDY 10

Scripture Portions: 2 Kings 2:14-17; Luke 9:28-36

Elisha was Elijah's successor.

For nine years he had understudied and worked with his master.

Now Elijah had gone. One question burned in Elisha's mind as he took up Elijah's mantle and walked to the bank of Jordan.

"Where is the Lord God of Elijah?"

2 Kings 2:14 -

"Is Elijah's God with me? Is He still the same? That is the one thing that matters!"

To seek positive evidence that God was with him, Elisha struck the waters with the mantle. Immediately they were divided.

2 Kings 2:14 -

The onlookers saw the power of God.

2 Kings 2:15 -

God was indeed with Elisha!

What is the lesson for us?

God is still the same. His power is undiminished.

His servants may die, times may change, but He remains. He is our God; with us today.

Hebrews 13:8 -

ELIJAH'S GOD IS OUR GOD.

What does this mean in a practical sense?

It means that the Lord God who kept Elijah faithful when most of the nation had turned aside, can keep us faithful and loyal.

Throughout his ministry, he was surrounded by apostasy.

He was in contact with Ahab and Jezebel. He experienced loneliness, self-pity, and discouragement. Yet, through God's power, he was kept true to the end.

Do you wonder if you can remain true to the Lord? Remember - Elijah's God is your God and He will never fail you.

Hebrews 13:5-6 -

Compare with -

Philippians 1:6 -

2 Timothy 4:18 -

Jude 24 -

It means that the Lord God who fed Elijah, supplying his temporal needs, can supply our every need.

He sent bread and flesh when he was by the brook Cherith - **1 Kings 17:2-7.**

He sent meal and oil for the household at Zarephath - **1 Kings 17:8-16.**

Can He do that for us? Yes! **Matthew 6:25-34.**

It means that the Lord who worked miracles for and through Elijah will work miracles for and through us.

1 Kings 17:1-6 -

1 Kings 17:8-16 -

1 Kings 17:17-23

1 Kings 18:36-38 -

1 Kings 19:5-7 -

2 Kings 1:9-12 -

2 Kings 2:8 -

2 Kings 2:11 -

Has God altered?

No! He can and He does still perform miracles.

It means that the Lord God who answered Elijah's prayers is ready and willing to answer ours.

James 5:16-18 -

These verses emphasize that God answers the earnest and sincere prayer of any believing Christian. The illustration given as to the kind of prayer God will answer is of Elijah's praying that it might not rain, then praying again that it would! Does God still answer prayer like this? He does. Elijah's God is our God!

e. It means that the Lord God who was so gracious and kind to His sick, overwrought servant, will deal just as lovingly and tenderly with us.

Let us be slow to condemn Elijah. He did fail - but so do we. The same God who was so gracious and forgiving, and restored Elijah, will deal with us just as graciously.

8. ELIJAH'S GOD IS OUR GOD.

When do we especially need to be reminded of this?

1. When we have experienced the sorrow of separation and bereavement.

Elisha knew Elijah was to leave him. That did not lessen the blow when it actually happened.

When bereavement comes to us, perhaps more than at any other time, we need to experience the power, presence and sufficiency of our God. Elijah's God, the mighty,

comforting God, is our God.

2. When we are about to undertake some new responsibility in service.

Elisha was now commencing his ministry as Elijah's successor. The responsibility was great. He felt his own inadequacy and insufficiency for the task - but God was the same!

The God who has so wonderfully used His servants all down the ages, is with us to bless and to use us.

- c. When we are confronted by obstacles and problems which defy human solution.*

Elisha faced the Jordan. Elijah had crossed it by performing a miracle. Would God do the same for him? Yes!

And the same miracle-working God will give us grace to overcome our obstacles and solve our problems.

4. When we are surrounded by infidels, skeptics and enemies of the Lord. Elisha had to face the skepticism of the sons of the prophets -

2 Kings 2:16-18 -

the mockery of the young men -

2 Kings 2:23-25 -

He needed to know the mighty God of Elijah was on his side. Are you scoffed at and mocked because you are a Christian?

Encourage yourself that Elijah's God is your God.

- e. When we need to let others see that our faith is working.*

Picture Elisha smiting the waters with the mantle and asking, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" What was the reaction of the watching college students to the mighty demonstration of the power of God?

Read -

2 Kings 2:15 -

The world is waiting to see visible evidence that God is alive and active. When unbelieving and skeptical men and women see the power of God operating in the lives of His people and in His Church, then they will fall at His feet in worship and faith. That will be revival.

Closing Thought:

Psalm 48:14 -

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