

# A Lesson from Elijah

1 Kings 17-19 / James 5:16-17

## Elijah Proclaims a Drought

<sup>1</sup> And **Elijah the Tishbite**, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, **except at my word.**”

<sup>2</sup> Then the **word of the Lord** came to him, saying, <sup>3</sup>“Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. <sup>4</sup>And it will be *that* you shall drink from the brook, and **I have commanded the ravens to feed you** there.”

<sup>5</sup> So he went and did **according to the word** of the Lord, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. <sup>6</sup>The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook. <sup>7</sup>And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

## Elijah and the Widow

<sup>8</sup> Then the **word of the Lord** came to him, saying, <sup>9</sup>“Arise, go to Zarephath, which *belongs* to Sidon, and dwell there. See, **I have commanded a widow** there to provide for you.” <sup>10</sup>So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow *was* there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, “Please bring me a **little water** in a cup, that I may drink.” <sup>11</sup>And as she was going to get *it*, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.”

<sup>12</sup> So she said, “As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I *am* gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.”

<sup>13</sup> And Elijah said to her, “**Do not fear**; go *and* do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring *it* to me; **and afterward** make *some* for yourself and your son.

<sup>14</sup> **For thus** says the Lord God of Israel: ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.’”

<sup>15</sup> So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for *many* days. <sup>16</sup>The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according **to the word of the Lord** which He **spoke** by Elijah.

## Elijah Revives the Widow’s Son

<sup>17</sup> Now it happened after these things *that* the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. <sup>18</sup>So she said to Elijah, “What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?”

<sup>19</sup> And he said to her, “Give me your son.” So, he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying and laid him on his own bed. <sup>20</sup>Then **he cried out to the Lord** and said, “O Lord my God, **have You also brought tragedy** on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?”

<sup>21</sup> And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and **cried out to the Lord** and said, “O Lord my God, *I pray, let this child’s soul come back to him.*” <sup>22</sup> **Then** the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.

<sup>23</sup> And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, “See, your son lives!”

<sup>24</sup> Then the woman said to Elijah, “**Now by this I know** that you *are* a man of God, *and* that the word of the Lord in your mouth *is* the truth.”

## **1 Kings 18**

### **Elijah’s Message to Ahab**

<sup>1</sup>And it came to pass *after* many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, “Go, **present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain** on the earth.”

<sup>2</sup> So Elijah **went to present** himself to Ahab; and *there was* a severe famine in Samaria. <sup>3</sup> And Ahab had called **Obadiah**, who was in charge of *his* house. (*Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly.* <sup>4</sup> *For so it was, while Jezebel massacred the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and had fed them with bread and water.*)

<sup>5</sup> And Ahab had said to Obadiah, “Go into the land to all the springs of water and to all the brooks; perhaps we may find grass to keep the horses and mules alive, so that we will not have to kill any livestock.”

<sup>6</sup> So they divided the land between them to explore it; Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

<sup>7</sup> Now as Obadiah was on his way, suddenly Elijah met him; and he recognized him, and fell on his face, and said, “*Is that you, my lord Elijah?*”

<sup>8</sup> And he answered him, “*It is I. Go, tell your master, ‘Elijah is here.’*”

<sup>9</sup> So he said, “*How have I sinned, that you are delivering your servant into the hand of Ahab, to kill me?*” <sup>10</sup> *As the Lord your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to hunt for you; and when they said, ‘He is not here,’ he took an oath from the kingdom or nation that they could not find you.* <sup>11</sup> *And now you say, ‘Go, tell your master, “Elijah is here!”’ ?*

<sup>12</sup> *And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from you, that the Spirit of the Lord will carry you to a place I do not know; so when I go and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will kill me. But I your servant have feared the Lord from my youth.*

<sup>13</sup> *Was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord, how I hid one hundred men of the Lord’s prophets, fifty to a cave, and fed them with bread and water?* <sup>14</sup> *And now you say, ‘Go, tell your master, “Elijah is here.”’ He will kill me!”*

<sup>15</sup> Then Elijah said, “As the Lord of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely present myself to him today.” <sup>16</sup> So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him; and **Ahab went to meet** Elijah.

<sup>17</sup> Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, “*Is that you, O troubler of Israel?*”

<sup>18</sup> And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house *have*, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and have followed the Baals. <sup>19</sup> Now therefore, send *and* gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

### **Elijah’s Mount Carmel Victory**

<sup>20</sup> So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. <sup>21</sup> And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

<sup>22</sup> Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men. <sup>23</sup> Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*.

<sup>24</sup> Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” So all the people answered and said, “It is well spoken.”

<sup>25</sup> Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare *it* first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire *under it*.”

<sup>26</sup> So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, “O Baal, hear us!” But *there was* no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.

<sup>27</sup> And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry aloud, for he *is* a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.”

<sup>28</sup> So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. <sup>29</sup> And when midday was past, they prophesied until the *time* of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But *there was* no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.

<sup>30</sup> Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord *that was* broken down.

<sup>31</sup> And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.” <sup>32</sup> Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seah of seed.

<sup>33</sup> And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid *it* on the wood, and said, “Fill four waterpots with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.” <sup>34</sup> Then he said, “Do *it* a second time,” and they did *it* a second time; and he said, “Do *it* a third time,” and they did *it* a third time. <sup>35</sup> So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water.

<sup>36</sup> And it came to pass, at the *time of* the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and *that* I have done all these things at Your word. <sup>37</sup> Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and *that* You have turned their hearts back to You again.”

<sup>38</sup> Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that *was* in the trench. <sup>39</sup> Now when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; and they said, “**The Lord, He *is* God! The Lord, He *is* God!**”

<sup>40</sup> And **Elijah said to them**, “Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!” So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and **executed** them there.

### **The Drought Ends**

<sup>41</sup> Then Elijah said to Ahab, “**Go up, eat and drink; for *there is* the sound of abundance** of rain.” <sup>42</sup> So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; **then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees**, <sup>43</sup> and said **to his servant**, “Go up now, look toward the sea.”

So he went up and looked, and said, “*There is* nothing.” **And seven times he said**, “Go again.”

<sup>44</sup> Then it came to pass the seventh *time*, that he said, “There is a cloud, **as small as** a man’s hand, rising out of the sea!” So he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare *your chariot*, and go down **before** the rain stops you.’”

<sup>45</sup> Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab **rode** away and went to Jezreel.

<sup>46</sup> Then the **hand of the Lord** came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and **ran ahead** of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

## **1 King 19**

### **Elijah Escapes from Jezebel**

<sup>1</sup> And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. <sup>2</sup> Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.”

<sup>3</sup> And when he **saw that, he arose and ran for his life**, and went to Beersheba, which *belongs* to Judah, and left his servant there.

<sup>4</sup> But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he **prayed that he might die**, and said, “It is enough! Now, Lord, **take my life, for I *am* no better than my fathers!**”

<sup>5</sup> Then as he lay and **slept** under a broom tree, suddenly **an angel touched him**, and said to him, “Arise *and* eat.”

<sup>6</sup> Then he looked, and there by his head *was* a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and **lay down again**.

<sup>7</sup> And the angel of the Lord came back the second time, and touched him, and said, “Arise *and* eat, because the journey *is* too great for you.” <sup>8</sup> So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food **forty days and forty nights** as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.

<sup>9</sup> And there he **went into a cave**, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the Lord *came* to him, and He said to him, “**What are you doing here, Elijah?**”

<sup>10</sup> So he said, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. **I alone am left;** and they seek to take my life.”

### God’s Revelation to Elijah

<sup>11</sup> Then He said, “**Go out, and stand** on the mountain before the Lord.” And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, *but* the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the Lord was not in the earthquake; <sup>12</sup> and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the Lord was not in the fire; **and after the fire a still small voice.**

<sup>13</sup> So it was, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice *came* to him, and said, “**What are you doing here, Elijah?**”

<sup>14</sup> And he said, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. **I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.**”

<sup>15</sup> Then the Lord said to him: “Go, return on your way to the Wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, anoint Hazael as king over Syria. <sup>16</sup> Also you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi as king over Israel. **And Elisha the son of Shaphat** of Abel Meholah you shall anoint as prophet **in your place.**

<sup>17</sup> It shall be *that* whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill; and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. <sup>18</sup> **Yet I have reserved seven thousand** in Israel, all whose **knees have not** bowed to Baal, and every mouth that **has not kissed** him.”

### Elisha Follows Elijah

<sup>19</sup> So he departed from there, and found **Elisha the son of Shaphat**, who was plowing *with* twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him *and threw his mantle on him*. <sup>20</sup> And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, “Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow you.”

And he said to him, “Go back again, **for what have I done to you?**”

<sup>21</sup> So **Elisha** turned back from him and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen’s equipment, **and gave it to the people**, and they ate. Then **he arose** and followed Elijah and became his servant.

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