

LESSON 28
“After the Fire a Still Small Voice”
1 Kings 17-19

OVERVIEW:

Elijah the Prophet. What appears to be the mission of Elijah? To reclaim Israel and put them under covenant again. He holds the Apostolic keys.

Background information: Omri became king of Israel and established Samaria as the capital city. He made an alliance with Ethbaal, the king of Tyre (Phoenicia) and took princess Jezebel for his son Ahab to marry. The alliance was contrary to the Laws of Moses. Ahab was more evil than his father. He made groves for the worship of idols. Jezebel was the priestess of Baal in her country and she brought that practice to Israel.

SCRIPTURES:

1 Kings
CHAPTER 17

Elijah seals the heavens, and is fed by the ravens—At his command the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil of the widow of Zarephath fail not—He raises her son from death.

1 AND ^aElijah (Heb Eliyahu or Elijah; Greek: Helias (Elias) (The word Elijah means: “my God is Yah [Jehovah].) the Tishbite, (may have reference to the town of Tishbeh, in upper Galilee) ^bwho was of the inhabitants of Gilead (or from Tishbe in Gilead), said unto Ahab, **As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor ^crain these years,** (the drought lasted about 3 ½ years. See Luke 4:25-26 **25** But I tell you of a truth, many ^awidows were in Israel in the days of ^bElias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; **26** But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman *that was a widow.*) but according to my ^dword. (The Prophet Joseph Smith said of Elijah: “Elijah was the last prophet that held the keys of the Priesthood to administer” in all its ordinances, including the sealing ordinances. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “The sealing power! The apostolic power possessed by Adam and all the ancients; the heavenly endowment enjoyed by Enoch and Abraham and Elijah; the power of the Great God without which man cannot ascend to heights beyond the stars! Such now is resident with all of the Twelve – not with Peter only, to whom it was promised; not with the Chosen Three, who received it by angelic and divine conferral on the mount of Transfiguration, but with all of the Twelve.” *The Mortal Messiah*, vol. 3:92)

2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

3 Get thee hence, (He goes into hiding in an obscure place where he would not be found by the king, or passersby, soldiers, or shepherds. It was also a desolate place where no animals lived) and turn thee eastward, and ^ahide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* ^bbefore (or east of) (on the east side of Jordan) Jordan.

4 And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the **ravens to feed thee** there.

5 So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan.

6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and **he drank of the brook.**

7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. (Even the prophet was subject to the drought)

8 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

9 Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a^a widow woman there to sustain thee. (This was in Phoenicia on the coast of what is now Lebanon. It was outside the boundaries of Israel. It was in Jezebel's home country.)

10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11 And as she was going to fetch *it*, (She may have known from his mantle of black camel's hair that he was a prophet, which showed her faith in Jehovah.) he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of ^abread in thine hand.

12 And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. (She did not say no to the Prophet. She explained her circumstances.)

13 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. (The call is issued and the promise is given.)

14 For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. (Elijah was testing her faith. When we are called to serve, we may state our circumstances and after that, if still called, we should have the faith in the Lord to accept. Elder Holland said that the widow's response when Elijah asked her for food was an "expression of faith – as great, under these circumstances, as any I know in the scriptures... Perhaps uncertain what the cost of her faith would be... she first took her small loaf to Elijah, obviously trusting that if there were not enough bread left over, at least she and her son would have died in an act of charity.")

15 And she ^awent and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat *many* days. (There may have been many people in her house during this time. Elijah may have lived with her for two years.)

16 *And* the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.

17 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, *that* the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his ^asickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

18 And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my ^asin to remembrance, and to slay my son? (She was not critical of the prophet but was asking his help.)

19 And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.

20 And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

21 And he ^astretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's ^bsoul come into him again.

22 And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he ^arevived.

23 And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy ^ason liveth.

24 ¶ And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth. (Faith precedes the miracle. Miracles do not give faith, they confirm it. Most if not all of us have seen miracles. It is to confirm our faith in Christ. President Howard W.

Hunter said: “As a result of the many miracles in our lives, we should be more humble and more grateful, more kind and more believing. When we are personal witnesses to these wonders which God performs, it should increase our respect and love for him; it should improve the way we behave. We will live better and love more if we will remember that. We are miracles in our own right, every one of us, and the resurrected Son of God is the greatest miracle of all. He is, indeed, the miracle of miracles, and every day of his life he gave evidence of it. We should try to follow after him in that example.” The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter, p. 115)

CHAPTER 18

Elijah is sent to meet Ahab—Obadiah saves a hundred prophets, and meets Elijah—Elijah challenges the prophets of Baal to call down fire from heaven—They fail—He calls down fire, slays the prophets of Baal, and opens the heavens for rain.

1 AND it came to pass *after* many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

2 And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And *there was* a sore famine in Samaria.

3 And Ahab called Obadiah, which *was* the governor of *his* house. (Now Obadiah ^afeared the LORD greatly:

4 For it was *so*, when ^aJezebel ^bcut off the prophets of the LORD (She killed many of the prophets of Israel), that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.)

5 And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.

6 So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

7 ¶ And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, *Art* thou that my lord Elijah? (How did he recognize Elijah? From his mantle.)

8 And he answered him, I *am*: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*.

9 And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? (Others who sent word to Ahab that Elijah had been found when he had not been were killed.)

10 As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, *He is not there*; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. (Elijah was hunted even in the countries around the area.)

11 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*.

12 And it shall come to pass, *as soon as* I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the LORD shall ^acarry thee whither I know not; and *so* when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth.

13 Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel ^aslew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

14 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*: and he shall slay me.

15 And Elijah said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to day.

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that ^aAhab said unto him, *Art* thou he that troubleth Israel?

18 And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have ^aforsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

19 Now therefore send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the ^aprophets' of Baal four

hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the ^aprophets together unto mount Carmel.

21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt (How long hop ye between two boughs. The people were worshipping both Jehovah and Baal. Do we do the same? Worship God and the worldly distractions? President Kimball said that modern idols can take such forms as clothes, homes, businesses, machines, cars, pleasure boats, degrees and letters, and titles, power and prestige.) ye between ^atwo opinions? if the LORD *be* God, ^bfollow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people answered him not a word. (They were waiting for a good opportunity to present itself for them to choose. God in His mercy gave the opportunity.)

22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, *even* I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. (The 400 of Jezebel were not there.)

23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: (The prophets of Baal used trickery to start their fires by having small embers under the sacrifices and seemingly miraculously starting their fires.) and I will dress the other bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*:

24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. (Baal was the god of fire, surely he could do this miracle.) And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

25 And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress *it* first; for ye *are* many; and call on the name of your ^agods, but put no fire *under*.

26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But *there was* no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

27 And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he *is* a god; either he is talking, or he is ^apursuing, (or gone aside, or withdrawn) or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.

28 And they cried aloud, and ^acut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

29 And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that *there was* neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down.

31 And Elijah took ^atwelve stones, (a true altar of God) according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, ^bIsrael shall be thy name:

32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four ^abarrels (Heb jars) with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do *it* the second time. And they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time. And they did *it* the third time. (This resulted in 12 barrels of water)

35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. (The pouring of the water was to show the people as well as the heathen priests that there would be no trickery in the miracle they were about to see.)

36 And it came to pass at *the time* of the offering of the ^a*evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou *art* God in Israel, and *that I am* thy servant, and *that I have* done all these things at thy word.

37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know ^athat thou *art* the LORD God (or that thou, Jehovah, art the God), and *that thou hast turned* (mayest turn) their ^bheart back again.

38 Then the ^afire of the LORD fell, (the fire came from heaven. Fire came down from heaven at the

sacrifice of Solomon. See 2 Chronicles 7:1-1 NOW when Solomon had made an end of ^apraying, the ^bfire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house.) and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he *is* the God; the LORD, he *is* the God.

40 And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. (They may have cast over precipices 1400 feet high down to the river Kishon.)

41 ¶ And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* a sound of abundance of rain.

42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,

43 And said to **his servant**, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is* nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

44 And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

45 And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.

46 And the ^ahand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he ^bgirded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. (He outruns Ahab in his chariot. One of the myths of Baal was that he was the fastest of the gods. Elijah is showing that Jehovah has made him faster than Baal. This was about a 20 mile run.)

CHAPTER 19

Jezebel seeks the life of Elijah—An angel sends him to Horeb—The Lord speaks to Elijah, not in the wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire, but in a still small voice—Elisha joins Elijah.

1 AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the ^agods do *to me*, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. (If Jezebel had really wanted to kill Elijah, she would not have warned him.)

3 And when he saw *that*, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 ¶ But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a ^ajuniper (Heb broom-bush (a desert shrub)) tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I *am* not better than my fathers.

5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an ^aangel touched him, and said unto him, *Arise and eat.*

6 And he looked, and, behold, *there was* a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, *Arise and eat*; because the journey *is* too great for thee.

8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that ^ameat (Heb food) ^bforty days and forty nights unto ^cHoreb the ^dmount of God. (Where Moses received the tablets of stone.)

9 ¶ And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

10 And he said, I have been very jealous (diligent) for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they ^aseek my life, to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks 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:

12 And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire a ^astill small ^bvoice. (Elder Boyd K. Packer said: “Inspiration comes more easily in peaceful settings. Such words as quiet, still, peaceable, Comforter abound in the scriptures: Be still, and know that I am God. And the promise, ‘You shall receive my Spirit, the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter, which shall teach you the peaceable things of the kingdom.’” Ensign, Nov. 1991, p. 21)

13 And it was *so*, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, *there came* a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

14 And he said, I have been very ^ajealous (or zealous) (diligent) for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am ^bleft; and they seek my life, to take it away.

15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael *to be* ^aking over Syria: (Jehovah is the God of the whole earth, not just Israel.)

16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou ^aanoint *to be* king over Israel: and ^bElisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou ^canoint *to be* prophet in thy room. (Place.)

17 And it shall come to pass, *that* him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

18 Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

19 ¶ So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, (Elisha means “the God of Salvation.”) who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: (the other 11 oxen were led by his servants. This shows that Elisha was very wealthy.) and Elijah passed by him, and cast his ^amantle upon him. (This was evidence that Elisha had been called to be the next prophet of God.)

20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will ^afollow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. (This was a final feast for Elisha before embarking upon his errand as the prophet of God.) Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him. (Elisha was one of the choice 7,000 who had not worshipped Baal. He was among the school of the prophets, led by Elijah.)

(Joseph Smith said: “The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that ye have power to hold the key of the revelations, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth; and to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God, even unto the turning of the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the hearts of the children unto the fathers, even those who are in heaven. I wish you to understand this subject, for it is important; and if you receive it, this is the spirit of Elijah, that we redeem our dead, and connect ourselves with our fathers which are in heaven, and seal up our dead to come forth in the first resurrection; and here we want the power of Elijah to seal those who dwell on earth to those who dwell in heaven. This is the power of Elijah and the keys of the kingdom of Jehovah.” Teachings, p. 337-38)

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