

lr-ot-28
After the Fire a Still Small Voice
(1 Kings 17-19; 2 Kings 1-2)
By Lenet Hadley Read

[These scriptural events contain more prophecy about our days. (No wonder the scriptures say all the prophets have looked forward to our days! For Our Day was repeatedly revealed to and through them). These parallels testify the works of our days are *so vital* they were repeatedly revealed through similitudes. Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained, “[The Lord] uses ... similitudes so that whatever is done will remind all who are aware ... of a greater and more important reality” *The Promised Messiah*, p. 377.]

- I. The life of Elijah has great meaning for Our Days --- and in many ways.
 - A. We learn from him where to find the still small voice.
 - 1. Righteous promptings will not come in thunder and lightning, but as a still, small voice (1 Kings 19:9-19).
 - B. **The Holy Ghost especially helps us do the *works of Elijah*. There are many examples of how.**

“During the summer of 2003, I was in Michigan, USA, researching my great-great-uncle Robert Hall. At the end of my trip, I revisited a cemetery I had been to 20 years earlier.

“When I had visited the cemetery before, I noticed flowers on one of the headstones with the last name Hall. This time I wrote a note, dated it, and laminated it to protect it from the weather. Then I prayerfully left the note at the headstone, hoping that someone who could help me learn more about Robert Hall would find it. I returned home to California hopeful but skeptical that anything would come of this note.

“A week later I received a letter from a distant cousin named Deke Bentley.

“Yesterday I had a strange experience,” he wrote. “At 3:00 p.m. I was headed to buy strawberries when I decided to stop by the Plains Road Cemetery to check out my ancestors’ graves. I had not been there for several years. Next to the graves was your postcard.”

“Deke had gone to the cemetery the same day I had left the note. I called him immediately. During our conversation I found out that he lived in Hillsdale, more than 50 miles (80 km) from the cemetery.

“A few months later I eagerly returned to Michigan to visit Deke. He told me he had relatives buried in the cemetery directly across from his home, and he asked if I would like to go there. He told me that the cemetery had four gravestones of Halls, two that he knew nothing about.

“At the cemetery, Deke showed me the gravestones. The two he didn’t know about belonged to Martin and Anna Hall. I hadn’t brought my records, but I distinctly remembered having researched a Martin Hall.

“We rushed to the county courthouse an hour before it closed, hoping a death record would identify Martin’s parents. It did! Martin’s father was Robert Hall! **The Holy Ghost confirmed to me that my long search had ended.**

“Deke, not a member of the Church, said finding Robert Hall seemed “almost spiritual.” I smiled, knowing that the Spirit had led me. (Emphasis added).

“You may have been disappointed that you didn’t leave your note 20 years ago,” Deke said, “but the fact is that I moved to Hillsdale just three years ago!”

“This experience was a lesson to me that family history is indeed part of God’s work and that He leads us in our righteous efforts.” (By Marianne Chaplin Stovall, California, USA. *Ensign*, June 2014, p. 76). (Emphasis added).

II. But the Life of Elijah is also important because the Lord often used a pairing of historical figures to reveal both what would occur just *prior* to Christ’s coming and what would then occur *at* His coming. And this was true with Elijah and Elisha.

A. Remember: Because the Lord called Joshua to replace Moses in leading Israel into the Promised Land, many recognize He was bearing witness that Moses’ Law could not lead the people into Eternal Life. That could only be done by Jesus Christ, the true Joshua. (Jesus is the Greek form, Joshua the English form of the Hebrew, Yeshua).

B. Also, David’s kingship taught of Christ coming first as Shepherd King. Solomon’s kingship taught of His Second Coming --- as King of Glory, wisest Judge, Man of peace.

III. **The relationship between Elijah and Elisha similarly taught how Latter-day Saint work (temple work) is preparing for the next phase, Christ’s Second Coming.**

A. Elijah’s coming was promised and fulfilled in our day (D&C 110:13-16). (We are doing the preparatory work of Elijah and in that sense are also Elijahs.)

B. The physical work Elijah did in his time was a witness of the spiritual work we are doing in Our Day.

1. While the earth suffered famine, Elijah was fed from heaven, including by angels (1 Kings 17:4-6; 19:4-8). (Heavenly messengers came to nourish the prophet Joseph Smith during the spiritual famine that covered the earth. Heavenly nourishment continues to guide and bless members as they seek to carry out His preparatory work).

2. Elijah led Israel away from false gods **and back to the true God at new altars [our temples]** (1 Kings 18:17-18, 21, 30-32, 36-39). (The Church of Jesus Christ is doing this on a continual basis today through missionary work and temple work).

3. The Lord showed His acceptance of Elijah’s offering at the newly re-built altar by sending down fire. (At the dedication of the new Kirtland Temple, the Lord Himself appeared, sent other messengers which included the appearance of Elijah himself, and the temple was filled by the Fire of the Holy Spirit (D&C 110).

4. By Elijah the Lord “turned the hearts of the people” (1 Kings 18:37) (We do so through missionary work, and particularly family history and temple work).

5. **Elijah sought out a widow for nourishment (1 Kings 17:8-16). (Due to apostasy, Israel was cut-off or “widowed.” But the Lord promised in the last days, “[thou] shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood anymore” Isaiah 54: 4. We are that widowed bride who have entered into new covenants with Christ).**

6. The widow received him and Elijah restored her fatherless son’s life (1 Kings 17:17-24). (Elijah had the power to redeem the dead and to seal and unseal the heavens. These physical powers were symbolic of temple work today. **Through Elijah’s keys, the dead are being spiritually redeemed and we can be sealed to our families in the heavens.**)

IV. When Elijah himself appeared at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, he clearly identified our work with his work and told of the significance of its timing!

A. “Behold, the time has fully come which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi --- testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come --- To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse ---
Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; **and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.**” (D&C 110: 14-16).

B. Indeed, the end of our ministry will end as Elijah’s did, with fire coming down from heaven to destroy the wicked, with the righteous being caught up into heaven (2 Kings 1:10-12; 2:11; Luke 17:29-30; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

C. When we understand that Elijah’s work was a similitude of the great work we are doing in these latter-days, we can see why it was Elijah who brought the keys to do this work in this dispensation --- a work which is the fulfillment of his work!

D. The prophet Joseph Smith taught that “Elijah was to come and prepare the way and build up the kingdom before the coming of the great day of the Lord” (*Teachings*, p. 340). He also wrote, “... 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....” (*Ibid.*, pp. 337-8).

E. As stated in the heading of point III., there are many features in the relationship of Elijah and Elisha, who followed Him, which teach of the relationship between we Elijahs in Our Day and the One Who Shall Come After Us --- Jesus the Christ at His Return. We will see those parallels explained in Lesson 29.

[For further details on the relationship of Elijah and Elisha, see, Lenet Hadley Read, “Elijah and Elisha: Foreshadowing the Latter-day Work,” *Ensign*, March, 1988].