

CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE: ELIJAH AND ELISHA

MARCH 12, 2025

Background:

The name *Elijah* means “my God is Jehovah or my God is Yahweh.” Very little is known about this ninth century B.C. prophet. All the personal history known about this great man of God is stated in 1 Kings 17:1 “Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead.” Elijah prophecy during the reigns of Ahab and his son Ahaziah. The last prophet of the New Testament, John the Baptist, is associated with Elijah because of his apparel and mainly because he came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Matt. 11:14).

The name *Elisha* means “God is salvation.” Not much is known about this prophet that succeeded Elijah the Tishbite. Elisha was the son of Shaphat who lived in the Jordan valley and it appears that he was a farmer (1 Kings 19:16, 19).

Although there is very little personal information about these two men, the impact they had in biblical history still speaks today.

Lesson Outline:

Elijah Proclaims a Drought:

1 Kings 17: 1-7

Elijah and the Widow:

vv. 8 – 16

Elijah Revives the Widow’s Son:

vv. 17-24

Key Themes:

- God’s Sovereignty
- Faith, Trust, and Obedience
- Compassion

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Summary:

The prophet Elijah was commanded by God to confront the evil king Ahab of Israel. He prophesied a devastating drought upon the land of Israel because of the people's worship of idol gods. Elijah escapes to Kerith (Cherith) where God feeds him miraculously by ravens, and later by a poor widow in Zarephath. The widow shows kindness to the prophet and experiences a miracle, a continuous food supply for her and her son and the prophet. Elijah's interaction with the widow culminates in the resurrection of the widow's son.

Small Group Discussion:

1. Discuss God's reason for punishment on Israel.
2. How does this prophet of God show boldness?
3. Why is obedience to God necessary?
4. How is God's power demonstrated in the life of the widow and her son?

3/19 – 1 Kings 18: 1-19