

# ***Elijah: The Power of a Spirit-led Man***

**Objective: To serve God in power and courage**

**Read: 1 Kings 17 and 18**

**Memorize: 1 Kings 18:21**

**T**he most famous and dramatic of Israel's prophets, Elijah was a complex man of the desert who confronted kings. His mission was to drive the worship of Baal out of Israel. Called "the grandest and most romantic character that Israel ever produced,"<sup>1</sup> Elijah exemplifies the power of a Spirit-led man.



He prophesied before King Ahab that there would be no rain or dew apart from his declaration. In Zarephath he raised the widow's dead son to life (1 Kings 17:17–24). On Mount Carmel he called down fire from heaven (1 Kings 18:16–46). And 2 Kings 2:1–12 records how Elijah struck the River Jordan with his cloak and the river divided so he and Elisha could cross on dry land. Then, as Elisha watched, Elijah was caught up into heaven in a chariot of fire.

Through Malachi, God promised to send another prophet like Elijah to Israel who would "turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers" (Malachi 4:5,6). This prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist. Luke records the message of an angel to John's father, Zacharias, that his son would be "a man of rugged spirit and power like Elijah, the prophet of old; and he will precede the coming of the Messiah, preparing the people for his arrival. He will soften adult hearts to become like little children's, and will change disobedient minds to the wisdom of faith" (Luke 1:17, TLB).

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke record Elijah's appearance with Moses and Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. And one of the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation 11:4–6 is thought by many Bible students to be Elijah because of his power "to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying."

There is no doubt that Elijah was a Spirit-led man. But the real power of the prophet was not that he could perform miracles. The key to his abilities was his very personal relationship with God.

The same Holy Spirit who empowered the prophet indwells every child of God today. Jesus promised that we will have all the power we need when the Holy Spirit comes upon us (Acts 1:8), and this power will enable us to be fruitful witnesses for Christ as we help fulfill the Great Commission.

Although we may wish to perform amazing miracles for our Lord, our first priority is to focus on our relationship with Him. He can use us only when we are totally and unconditionally surrendered to His plan and purpose for our lives.



## **Bible Study**

### **Elijah**

1. Read 1 Kings 17:1–7. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false.  
The cessation of rain is dependent on all these factors: God lives; Elijah lived in His presence; and Elijah’s word controlled the rain.  
The Bible says that Elijah searched eagerly for the will of God.  
The prophet obeyed orders for the immediate future, though he did not know how it would turn out.  
Elijah thought the plan was absurd, and hesitated.  
The brook dried up, proving he was right.
2. What step of duty have you not taken because you cannot see its outcome?

### **The Widow**

1. Read 1 Kings 17:8–24. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false.  
Strict, implicit obedience characterized Elijah.  
When her boy died, guilt turned the widow’s eyes upon herself.  
God desires to remove from our lives now the guilt that can cripple our faith in time of crisis.
2. Do you think it was humiliating to take a step of faith that made him dependent on a very poor widow?
3. Why do you think God deals with us in such a way?

### **Ahab**

1. Read 1 Kings 18:1–18. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false.  
Ahab was at least concerned for his animals.  
He had refused to acknowledge the real reason for the problem (verses 17,18).  
Nevertheless, Elijah recognized the real reason (verses 17,18).
2. Describe a time when you were the cause of a problem for others that you did not acknowledge.  
What was the result?
3. How can you avoid this sin (Proverbs 3:5,6)?

### **Prophets of Baal**

1. Read 1 Kings 18:18–40. Write the verse number(s) in which Elijah did the following:  
Rebuked the people for compromise  
Challenged the enemies of God to a contest  
Blasted them with withering sarcasm  
Ordered water poured  
Prayed to God to make Himself known  
Ordered the priests executed
2. How can this incident apply to today?
3. Elijah's prayer in verse 36 provides a superb revelation of the Spirit-led life. Why do you think that is true?

### **LIFE APPLICATION**

1. Describe the relationship Elijah had with God.
2. How does your relationship and power with God compare to Elijah's?
3. How has God's power been exerted through you upon the lives of others?
4. What changes in your mental and spiritual thinking need to take place for you to find the power with God that you desire?