

GOD IS LOOKING FOR A MAN!

(WHERE ARE GOD'S ELIJAHS?)

(Living Water, Ocala FL – 2000; Ft. McCoy FL, Father's Day – 2013;
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TEXT:

“I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.”

(Ezekiel 22:30)

PRAY

INTRODUCTION

The people living in 1809 were focused on Napoleon who was
marching across Austria leaving death & destruction in his wake.

During that same period of time, thousands of babies were born in Britain and in America.

But who cared about babies & bottles & cribs & cradles
when Napoleon was doing his thing in Austria.

Somebody should have cared, because in 1809

- 1 William Gladstone was born in Liverpool
- 2 Alfred Tennyson began his life in Lincolnshire
- 3 Oliver Wendell Homes – Cambridge Mass.
- 4 Edgar Allan Poe – Boston
- 5 Charles Robert Darwin &
- 6 Robert Charles Winthrop were born that year;
- 7 and in a little log cabin in
Hardin County, Kentucky,
an illiterate laborer & his wife
named their newborn son,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN!

The lives of these statesmen, writers, & thinkers would change and mark the world –
for good and evil; but Napoleon was making headlines in 1809
and nobody cared about these nobodies.

In this 21st Century only history buffs can name one battle that Napoleon fought in Austria;
but there is not a person alive who has not been touched in some way
by these nobodies, nobody noticed in 1809.

I have come to talk to you today about a “nobody” from “no where.”
He was born in a village whose location on planet earth cannot be found.

He steps into the picture at zero hour in Israel’s history.
He follows no protocol, makes no introductions and offers no deference to royalty.

He is without sophistication, polish, training, or courtly manners.

BUT, God has been looking for just such a man.

For 6 uninterrupted, dark decades in Israel there has been unbelievable
bloodshed and assassinations, murder and malice, intrigue and immorality,
conspiracy and deception, hatred and idolatry.

This reign of evil began in the heart of the one on the throne, and poured down
into the very core of the people of the land.

And then, of all things, they turned Israel’s throne over to Ahab – who was wickedness
personified – who married Jezebel, which is a little bit like going from Jesse James
to Bonnie and Clyde.

And into all this madness and mayhem and complete despair,
**Elijah, the Tishbite – a nobody from nowhere –
makes his sudden and unannounced arrival.**

He is God’s man of the hour.

He stands toe-to-toe with the wicked king Ahab; & he announces,
without fear or hesitation,

**“As the Lord, the God of Israel lives,
before whom I stand,
surely there shall be neither dew nor rain
these years, except by my word.”**

LET’S BRING IT HOME!

MY QUESTION IS –
WHERE ARE GOD’S MODERN DAY ELIJAHS?!

Where are the men and women who have said, or who will say, “yes” to Jesus
and who will make a commitment to hang tough until the prophecies spoken over
this church, this pastor & this congregation are fulfilled?

Those men AND women who don't cut and run every time the devil says, "Boo!"

That group of people who, when

- (1) their feelings get hurt
- (2) they are slandered
- (3) or misunderstood
- (4) or ignored –
they burrow
into the Presence of God saying,

"You brought me here! You knew this would happen! So YOU take care of THIS business, while I DANCE ON THE ENEMY'S GRAVE!"

You say, "PRAISE GOD! I JUST MIGHT BE AN ELIJAH!
UH, BY THE WAY, what does it take to be an ELIJAH!?"

I GOD'S ELIJAH OBEYS!

Remember Elijah has issued God's ultimatum to the most powerful man in the land, whose domineering wife, Jezebel, has been destroying the prophets of the Lord right and left. (**I Kings 18:4**)

& then in **I Kings 17:3, 4** Elijah gets a "weird" message from the Lord.

"Go to the East and hide by the Brook Cherith at a place East of where it enters the Jordan River. Drink from the brook and eat what the ravens bring you; for I have commanded them to feed you."

V. 5 NO QUESTIONS ASKED – ELIJAH OBEYED.

QUESTION: How do you think Elijah felt when the Lord said,

- 1 "Drink from the brook
and the ravens
will be your catering service?"
- 2 The ravens showed up
w/his lunch swinging from their beaks?

The good news is this:

Without one moment's hesitation, Elijah obeyed. He didn't even ask why!

God said, *"Go there. Settle there. Live there."* & that's what Elijah did.

**BUT – “After a while, the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.”
(I Kings 17:7)**

How do you think he felt when God said, “YOU CAN MOVE OUT NOW!”

Relief? Gratitude? Excitement?

Maybe, but that’s not all God said!!

**“Arise, go to Zarephath,
which belongs to Sidon,
and stay; behold, I have commanded
a widow there to provide for you.” (v. 8)**

Now, Zarephath was located at least one hundred miles from Cherith.
That meant that Elijah had to walk 100 miles across open and unprotected land –
alone; even though Ahab & Jezebel had a price on his head.

AGAIN, HE ASKED NO QUESTIONS!

v. 10 “He went to Zarephath.”

He finds the widow. He asked her for a cup of water and a bite of bread.
OOPS! – She has no bread in the house!

**“I have only a handful of flour left and a little cooking oil in the bottom of the
jar. I was going to cook this last meal, and then my son and I will die of
starvation.”**

HOW DO YOU THINK HE FELT –

Asking for her last cake? Listening to her sad reply? Eating her last cake?

Well, I’m not sure how he **FELT**; but let me tell you what he **SAID**!

**Elijah: “Don’t be afraid. Go ahead and cook your ‘last meal,’
but bake me a little loaf of bread first; and afterward there will be
enough for you and your son.”**

**v. 15 “So she, Elijah, and her son continued to eat from her supply
of flour and oil as long as it was needed.”**

**ELIJAH HAD ONCE AGAIN OBEYED GOD –
NO QUESTIONS ASKED! & GOD HAD SUPPLIED!**

- 1 As a man or woman of God you *will have* your *king Ahab* experience, where you must stand in the face of opposition & declare the Word of the Lord!

You can leave town or you can roll over and play dead!
It's YOUR decision!

But, if you will stand in obedience to Jehovah,
you *will see* the salvation of the Lord!

- 2 As a modern-day Elijah, you will have your “Brook Cherith” experience, where you may not know what another day will bring.

You can take the coward's way out or you can wait in obedience
and hear God say,

“Fear not: for I am the Lord your God; I have redeemed you, I have called you by your name; you are mine!”

- 3 As a modern-day Elijah, you will have your Zarapheth experience.

Someone will be placed in front of you who needs what you have.

You will reach out in obedience to God's command, and you will hear yourself say,

**“Silver and gold have I none:
but such as I have give I thee.
In the Name of Jesus, rise up and walk!”**

GOD'S ELIJAH OBEYS GOD!

II GOD'S ELIJAH STAYS!

REMEMBER, GOD HAD SAID,

“Elijah, go to the Brook and STAY, don't leave, until I tell you it's time!
It doesn't matter if the ravens are late, if the brook dries up,
or you get gorged out on ‘raven food’ –

**STAY UNTIL YOU GET
MARCHIN' ORDERS!”**

God had said:

“Elijah, go to the widow’s house at Zarapheth and STAY, don’t leave,
until you see my hand move, until you hear my voice,
& until a miracle happens in that house!”

AND NOW GOD SAYS,

“Elijah, go to the top of Mt. Carmel and STAY, don’t leave,
until the fire falls, the enemy is put to flight,
and revival comes to the people of God!”

The adversary of our souls loves to derail us, discourage us, and tempt us to quit
altogether; but **GOD’S MODERN-DAY ELIJAHS STAY!**

They –

Don’t give up! Don’t cry uncle! Are not discouraged! Don’t roll over and play dead!

They –

Stick it out!

They Stay!

My friend,

- 1 When the enemy comes in like a flood – STAY!
- 2 When those on the outside
want you to run off with them
& play patty-cake church somewhere else - STAY!
- 3 When the vision tarries – STAY
- 4 When it seems the prophecies
will not come to pass – STAY!
5. When your questions out-number the answers – STAY!
6. When you still don’t know why you’re in the
Crystal River COG – STAY!
7. When you get homesick for home,
& your home church,
and the old folks at home – STAY!

**“THEY THAT WAIT UPON THE LORD –
(THEY THAT STAY WHERE GOD PUTS THEM) –
SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH,
THEY SHALL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS
AS THE EAGLES.
THEY SHALL RUN AND NOT BE WEARY;
THEY SHALL WALK AND NOT FAINT!”**

(Personal Testimony: Mother, Pastor James L. Slay, Kannapolis, NC.)

Listen to the voice of the Lord:

OBEY MY VOICE AND NOT ANOTHER,
for to love me is to obey ME; & obedience is better than sacrifice!

STAY WHERE I HAVE COMMANDED YOU!
STAY – in the hollow of my hand!

STAY – under the shadow of My wings!
STAY – where I have placed you!
Don't move!
Don't quit!
Don't run!
Don't be distracted!!!

And **SUDDENLY,**
**“You will hear a voice behind you saying, this is the way,
walk ye in it, when you turn to the left or to the right!”**

GOD'S ELIJAH
OBEYS THE WORD OF THE LORD;
HE STAYS UNTIL GOD SAYS, “MOVE!”
&

III GOD'S ELIJAH PRAYS

Elijah is now at Mt. Carmel; because that's where God said go.

I Kings 18

Arrayed before him were the idol-worshiping, indecisive people of the land.

Standing by were 850 priests & prophets of Baal & Ash-e-rah.

No doubt idol shrines could be seen in every direction from the summit of Mount Carmel.

**But Elijah was not afraid; because the equation was never
850 against one. It was always 850 against ONE PLUS GOD!**

Elijah allowed the prophets of Baal to go 1st!
And said, “The God that answers by fire

The people howled & screamed & screeched! The noise got louder & louder!
It was sheer diabolical insanity! & the frenzied dancing went on for hours.

The howls became piercing & demonic.
They bit themselves, cut themselves w/swords & lances, & the blood began to flow.

It was an unforgettable scene of chaos & confusion!
& STILL NOTHING HAPPENED!!

THEIR GOD PAID THEM NO ATTENTION!!

**And then Elijah stepped up to the plate! He repaired the altar of the Lord.
He turned the prophets of Baal into water boys!
He soaked the altar, the wood, the sacrifice & filled up the trench.**

**Elijah’s prayer was simple. No pleading or screaming. No shouting.
No frenzied dancing. No empty repetitious phrases.
Just 63 words of faith!
The response was immediate; & it was a consuming FIRE!!**

James 5:17 18

“Elijah was as completely human as we are; and he prayed earnestly

**Look at v. 16 that precedes the two about Elijah.
“The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much!”**

Effectual – powerfully productive

Fervent – red hot!

Availeth much – what he is praying for becomes accessible or obtainable!

WHEN GOD'S ELIJAH PRAYS –

He gets results!
Heaven holds its breath.
God's attention is turned in the pray-er's direction!
Jesus says, "Somebody just called my Name!"
Hell starts shaking &
The Holy Ghost goes into action!

Man of God,

- 1 Realize that God is interested in YOU!**
- 2 Forget your mistakes!**
They can't be undone; & besides that,
they're behind you!
- 3 Do not limit your potential!**
Remember, one man and God
make a majority!

Hudson Taylor, great missionary to China:

"ALL GIANTS have been WEAK MEN who did great things for God because they reckoned on His power and His Presence to be with them."

Now hear Jesus say to the early church,

"Tarry (*obey, stay and pray*) in Jerusalem
until ye be endued with power from on high!"

Acts 1:4, 5 –

"Do not depart from Jerusalem, but (*obey, stay and pray*)
for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me.

For John truly baptized in water
but ye shall be baptized w/the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

v. 8

(And) ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you;
and ye shall be witnesses unto me unto the uttermost part of the earth!

v. 13 –

And they went up into an upper room,
and they (*obeyed, stayed & prayed*) with one accord

& because they obeyed, stayed & prayed,

Acts 2:2-4

Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

WHAT IF THE REST OF THAT CHAPTER READ LIKE THIS?

AND THE CONGREGATION IN THE CRYSTAL RIVER COG WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST

and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And they spilled out of the church house & scattered all over CITRUS County; and the word got around that there were men and women from Crystal River who were speaking in languages which they had never learned.

And the county was amazed and marveled, saying one to another,
“Aren’t all of these CITRUS County residents?
How is it that we hear them speak in all these different languages
the wonderful works of God.”

Some of the County officials asked, “What does this mean?”

Others said, “They are drunk!”

But Pastor RONNIE REID stood up with the other Elijahs –
men and women from his congregation and said,

“Ye men of CITRUS County, and especially you who dwell
in and around Crystal River, be this known unto you,
and hearken to my words: These are not drunk as ye suppose,
but, THIS IS THAT which was spoken by the prophet Joel:
IT SHALL COME TO PASS in the last days,
saith God, “I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh;
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy;
and your young men shall see visions;
and your old men shall dream dreams.”

And on my servants and on my hand maidens
I will pour out in those days of my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.

Ye men of Crystal River, hear these words,
Jesus Christ was put to death but God has raised Him up
and exalted him to the right hand of God Himself;
and we are His witnesses!

For we, at the CRYSTAL RIVER COG, have received of the Father
the promise of the Holy Ghost which ye now see and hear!”

**And the hearts of the residents were stirred and they asked,
“What must we do?”**

And Pastor RONNIE REID said,
“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of
Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of
the Holy Ghost! For the promise is unto you, and to your children,
and to all that are afar off even as many
as the Lord our God shall call.”

**And they that gladly received his word were baptized;
and the same day there were added to the CRYSTAL RIVER
Church of God about 3,000 souls!**

**And the Lord added DAILY to the CRYSTAL RIVER COG
such as should be saved!**

“Oh, this is impossible,” some might say!

Let’s go back to James 5:17, 18 – “Elijah was a man” –

(Have several men stand up.)

**Just like these men!
And he prayed earnestly and God heard”**

**Friend, you have not been waiting on God!
God has been waiting on you!**

Paul under Holy Spirit direction w/a message from God.

Romans 12:1

“I (beg) you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

GOD IS SAYING TO YOU,

“You’re standing before ME; and I want to use you.

I have a plan; & that plan includes YOU!

I have a purpose for your life. I have a gap that needs to be filled;

& I’m looking for a man who will obey, stay and pray at my command!”

GOD SAYS:

“It doesn’t matter if you are

1 a respected professional,

2 an athlete,

3 a homemaker,

4 a teacher,

5 a public figure,

6 a politician,

7 a student,

8 a private citizen,

9 a mama, a daddy,

10 a grandparent,

11 a teenager

12 or a nobody from nowhere –

“I am looking for that man who will stand tall, stand firm & stand strong! A MAN WHO WILL OBEY, STAY & PRAY!”

Will YOU be a modern day Elijah? A man who will answer the call of our text –
Ezekiel 22:30

“I searched for a man who would stand in the gap before me for the land, so that I should not destroy it”

THE KING OF ALL QUESTIONS IS:
WILL YOU BE THAT MAN?

Will you obey? Will you stay? Will you pray?