

ELIJAH: PROPHET OF FIRE

Monday, September 11

Reading: 1 Kings 16-17

1 Kings 17:1 *Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."*

"He came like a whirlwind, he burned like a fire, and in fire and whirlwind he disappeared."¹ Thus wrote English pastor and writer W. Graham Scroogie about the prophet Elijah.

To the Jewish people, Elijah is like a superhero. Many legends have developed beyond the Biblical text of Elijah's life. Some believe that Elijah is like a guardian angel who still appears to help those who are in distress. He is said to stand at the crossroads of paradise to lead the pious to their place of rest. Traditionally at Passover, an extra place or cup is set for the prophet who they believe will one day come to announce the coming of the Messiah (based on Malachi 3-4 - Jesus said this prophecy was fulfilled in the coming of John the Baptist - Matthew 17:10-13; Luke 1:13-17).

When we read the fantastic events of Elijah's life it is easy to see why the Jewish people built these legends around him. He was a prophet of fire! But James reminds us that he was "a man just like us" (James 5:17). Elijah's greatness came from his relationship with God.

As we study his life this week, we need to observe his relationship with God and how it impacted his life and ministry. God wants all of us to be on fire for Him. Elijah can help teach us how to do this.

POINTS TO PONDER:

1. Like Elijah, we live in a time when people are abandoning God to follow their own selfish desires and plans. How are we, as Christians, to respond to the degrading culture around us?
2. What does it mean to "stand" for God?
What does it mean to be "on fire" for God?

¹ W. Graham Scroogie. The Unfolding Drama of Redemption, p. 330