

Elijah – An ordinary Prophet greatly used by God

Scriptures: 1 Kings 17:1-6; James 5:17-18

Elijah is a colorful biblical figure whose character and style are very distinctive. What he did was striking. His presence always leaves a lasting impression. His prayers were powerful.

He could summon wind and rain and make fire fall from the sky. He breaks the law of human death. He was carried up to heaven in a whirlwind, accompanied by a chariot of fire with fiery horses, and could go directly to heaven without seeing death. Elijah was one of the three main characters during the Transfiguration of Jesus. He is so majestic and awesome!

But James 5:17 makes a very surprising comment about Elijah: "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours." Elijah was not a superman. He had the same emotions and desires as we do, encountered the same temptations, went through the same struggles, made the same mistakes, and had the same weaknesses. He was just an ordinary man like you and me, but he was able to do great things for God.

Brothers and sisters, are you interested in knowing what makes him so special? Why can an ordinary person accomplish extraordinary things for God? How can ordinary people like you and I accomplish extraordinary things for God? There are three secrets:

1. Boldly uphold God's principles

The first thing Elijah did when he debuted was to confront Ahab. Ahab was the king of Israel at that time. The Bible says that Ahab did evil in the sight of the Lord more than any king before him; he provoked God to anger more than any king of Israel before him (see 1 Kings 16:30-33). King Ahab was definitely not someone to be trifled with; if you offended him, you could be beheaded at any time. Why did Elijah have the guts to go up and confront him? It was because the word of the Lord came to Elijah. He was a man who adhered to God's principles. God said and so he did, without any compromise.

Yes, Christians need to be clever. But being clever does not mean giving up principles. Sometimes you have to make a decision to stand by God's principles even if it costs you money or even means loss. The problem today is that many Christians are too "smart" and too good at behaving

themselves, so that people cannot even recognize that they are Christians. How can such Christians have any influence on society?

Today in the kingdom of God, there is no need for people with great wisdom and talent, nor is there a need for more strategies and methods. What society desperately needs today is a group of people who have the courage to stand up for God's principles. In a society where most people have given up their principles, it may be difficult at first for you to stick to God's principles and live your life. But please do not look at the circumstances, do not worry about the consequences, God will be responsible for the consequences, you just need to stick to God's principles, and you will succeed in the end. God promises that those who adhere to His principles will have a smooth road and success in everything.

2. There is a life hidden in God

Sometimes we need to get away from the group and be alone with God. "The word of the LORD came to Elijah, saying, 'Get out of here, turn eastward, and hide by the brook Cherith, which is by the Jordan.'" (17:2-3) God commanded Elijah to hide. During this period of hiding, Elijah deeply appreciated God's faithful provision (see 17:4-6). So when Elijah came out of his hidden life, he was able to have confidence in God's power.

In a fast-paced society, it is difficult to stop and rest in God. But if you do not know how to hide in God, you will not have the power to give, because "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength" (Isaiah 30:15). If you deeply know God's faithful provision while you are hiding, you will have the courage to stand up and challenge others, and what you say will be powerful.

3. Take risks for God

In Chapter 18, Elijah challenged 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah on Mount Carmel to compete with each other to see which god was the true God. Elijah called for fire to come down from heaven. What if the fire did not come? This requires taking risks. God likes people to take risks for Him. A person who takes risks for God reflects his dependence on God. No miracle will happen if you just sit and wait. Only through adventurous actions can we experience the Lord's faithful provision.

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you consider yourself an ordinary person? In your own experience, have you ever had any experiences where God accomplished extraordinary things through an ordinary person like you? Please share an experience like this and how you felt about it.
2. Of the three secrets that enable ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things, which one are you weakest in? Why do you feel the weakest? How to improve on that weakness?