


Elijah: A Man Like Us

Part Two

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a "transforming church". We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Since "**Talking Points, Walking Points**" is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to "dive deep" too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled "**Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time**", are perfect for private reflection.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

- Review the definition of "Providence", found at the top of "**Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time**". How do you see God's "Providence" in action in 1 Kings 17:8-24?

How might a **skeptic** explain away each of those events?

How have **you** experienced God's Providence in **your own** life?

- The miracle in 1 Kings 17:13-16 did **not** convince this pagan widow that Yahweh was the true God, yet the miracle in v. 17-24 **did** (note v. 24). **How** do you explain that?

What convinced **you** that Yahweh is the true God and Jesus Christ is the only Savior?

Creating "God Space": "God Space" is where cynics, skeptics, and spiritually curious people can safely raise their questions, reservations, & doubts because we have listened well and demonstrated love in practical, authentic ways.

- Who** do you know **personally** that reminds you of "the widow of Zarephath"?

What has he/she experienced of the providential working of God (either directly, or through believers)?
How does he/she explain it?

How could you help him/her evaluate that experience so as to not miss seeing God in it?

Application-Challenge

- Choose to be a modern day Elijah by being willing to go where God leads you to go, and by being willing to do what God leads you to do.
- Allow the Spirit of God to express his supernatural life and love through you. It is this supernatural mark which will attract people to our Savior.

Sermon Summary

Key Text: 1 Kings 17:8-24

We closed our time together last week with Elijah sitting beside a brook, waiting out the drought. But soon, even that brook dried up. If that is your plight today, you may be wondering, “*Where is God is all of this?*” He is closer than you think. And he is not finished with you. Let’s see what we can learn by observing how God dealt with his prophet Elijah (1 Kings 17:8-24). We see this by looking at **three of Elijah’s relationships**:

[1] Elijah and God (v. 8-9). The word of God came to Elijah at the point of his greatest need—when the brook had dried up. Up until this point, God had called Elijah mostly to a ministry of solitude; now he is catapulted to public ministry. Now Elijah is being called to minister to others who are in need. Times of reflection and meditation are desperately needed—but there is an inherent danger: we can become comfortable and self-focused. There is something about getting involved in the messy details of other people’s lives that we recoil against. It’s much less threatening to remain in seclusion than to become enmeshed in the thorny needs of people. It was a dangerous trip—over 100 miles, across a desert, during a time of drought, directly into enemy territory (there even was a bounty on his head; 1 Kings 18:10)! A couple of other things made this trip particularly distasteful: Zarephath was in wicked Queen Jezebel’s home country, the source of idolatrous Baal worship—which involved even child sacrifice (essentially infanticide for religious purposes)! God sent Elijah there, and without protesting, he went. Additionally, he was to ask an impoverished widow there to provide for him. How humiliating!

[2] Elijah and the widow (v. 10-16). When Elijah arrived, he met a thread-bare widow who was gathering a few sticks to build a fire to cook a final meal for herself and her son—and then they would die of starvation! After walking 100 miles, Elijah politely asked her for a drink (v. 10). Remember—they’re in a drought; water is scarce, but she obliged him. Then he asked her for a piece of bread (v. 11). She replied that she only had enough for her and her son to eat one meal before they died (v. 12). This poor woman is hopeless! But Elijah instructed her: “*Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake from it first and bring it out to me, and afterward you may make one for yourself and for your son. For thus says the Lord God of Israel, ‘The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth.’*” (v. 13-14). In one sense, she had little to lose. She complied—and so did God! Her one handful of flour and oil lasted until the drought was over! Elijah arrived just in time to meet this woman’s needs, but it was God’s providence, not good fortune, that saved her.

[3] Elijah and the widow’s son (v. 17-24). Elijah stayed perhaps two years with this widow and her son. I suspect he spent a lot of time instructing then in the things of the Lord. It’s not hard to imagine that Elijah became quite attached to this young boy who had no father; no doubt Elijah became a father figure to him. And then, the boy suddenly died (v. 17)! This widow must have wondered how the miracle of the oil and flour jived with the death of her only son (v. 18). Even though she accused Elijah for her trouble, Elijah simply took the boy, prayed, and God brought him back to life (v. 19-22)! What a reunion that must have been (v. 23). But don’t miss v. 24. The miracle of the oil and flour hadn’t convinced her, but when she saw the miracle of life, she got the message!

Elijah was a man who listened to God—and God listened to his prayers! What is there in your life that you cannot explain on any other basis other than the supernatural? Are you ready to say, “*God, here I am. Use me. I’m ready, willing, and able. Whatever you ask me to do, I will do.*”?

Talking To Others About This Week’s Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, “*What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?*”, how would you summarize the most important elements of this week’s sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? Can you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

God's "Providence" is his care creation, involving his preserving its existence and meticulously guiding it to his intended purposes. "Providence" summarizes God's on-going relationship to his creation.

What is the **extent** of God's Providence? (Each bullet point below points to **one** realm of his Providence.)

- Psalm 103:19; Daniel 4:35; Ephesians 1:11 _____
- Job 37:1-13; Psalms 104:14 & 135:6; Matthew 5:45 _____
- Psalm 104:21 & 28; Matthew 6:26 & 10:29 _____
- Job 12:23; Psalms 22:28 & 66:7; Acts 17:26 _____
- 1 Samuel 1:19-20; Psalm 139:16; Isaiah 45:5; Galatians 1:15-16 _____
- Psalm 75:6-7; Luke 1:52 _____
- Proverbs 16:33; Matthew 10:30 _____
- Psalms 4:8; 5:12; 63:8; 121:3; Romans 8:28 _____
- Genesis 22:8 & 14; Deuteronomy 8:3; Philippians 4:19 _____
- 1 Samuel 1:9-19; 2 Chronicles 33:13; Psalm 65:2; Matthew 7:7; Luke 18:7-8 _____
- Psalms 7:12-13 & 11:6 _____

God's Providence **preserves** all creation. In the following verses, **what** do you see God preserving?

- Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:17 _____
- Job 34:14-15; Psalm 104:29 _____
- Acts 17:28 _____
- Nehemiah 9:6 _____

God's sovereign Providence **concurs** with human choices and actions.

- Define "concur" (see Dictionary.com). _____

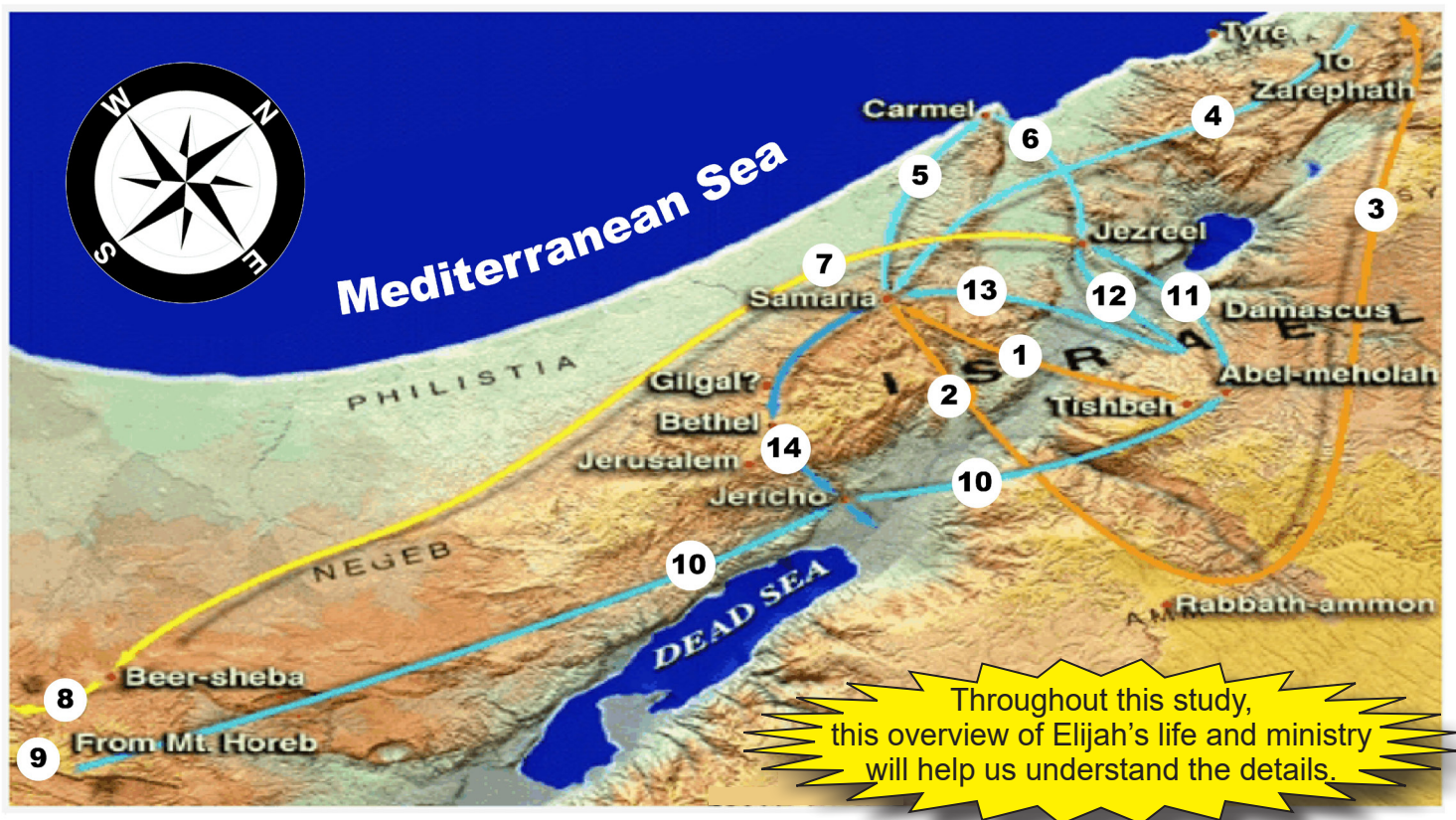
- Write out the latter half of Ephesians 1:11 _____

- ...yet notice what is said of non-believers in Ephesians 2:1-3 & 4:17-19 _____

- ...and notice who all was involved in Titus' decision in 2 Corinthians 8:16-17 _____

God providentially **governs/rules** all of creation. **What** do these passages say God governs?

- Psalm 47 _____
- Psalms 22:28-29 & 103:17-19; Daniel 4:34-35 _____
- Philippians 2:13; Acts 14:16 _____
- Proverbs 16:33 _____



1. Elijah of Tishbeh went to Samaria to warn Ahab of a drought (1 Kings 17:1)
2. Elijah then retired to the brook Cherith, where he was fed until the brook dried up. (17:1-7)
3. Then Elijah was sent to Zarephath, where he multiplied the widow's oil and meal. (17:8-24)
4. In the third year Elijah returned to Samaria and met Ahab (1 Kings 18:1-19)
5. Then Elijah summoned Israel to Mt. Carmel to decide between Yahweh and Baal. Yahweh was vindicated by fire consuming the altar and sacrifice (18:20-40)
6. As rain came, Elijah ran before Ahab to Jezreel (18:41-46)
7. Threatened by Jezebel, Elijah fled southward through Beersheba (1 Kings 19:1-3)
8. Here Elijah was visited by an angel in the desert under a juniper tree (19:4-8a)
9. Elijah went on to Mt. Horeb (18:8b-14)
10. Returning to Gilead, Elijah appointed Elisha of Abel-meholah as prophet (19:15-21)
11. Later Elijah rebuked Ahab at Jezreel for the murder of Naboth (1 Kings 20:1—21:19)
12. It is *possible* that Elijah then returned to Gilead until Ahab's death (1 Kings 21:20-29)
13. Journeying to Samaria, Elijah met Ahaziah's messengers, then the king himself, and predicted the latter's death (2 Kings 1)
14. Finally Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal through Bethel and Jericho, across the Jordan, to the place of his ascension (2 Kings 2)