

# Elijah: A Man Like Us

## Part Four

2020.7.26



# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

"Talking Points, Walking Points" is 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

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

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.

- On the following scale, rate your current prayer life ("10" being "effective, fervent, and righteous").



Has there been a time when your prayer life was more "effective, fervent, and righteous"?

If so, **when** was that? **Why** do you think it was better then? What accounts for the change?

- Read 1 Kings 18:42b-44a. Elijah had to persevere in prayer as he waited for God to answer. Tell about a time you persevered in prayer. How long did you pray? Did you grow discouraged?
- Read Luke 18:1-8, then consider the following questions:  
**Why** did Jesus tell this parable? "to show that \_\_\_\_\_ they \_\_\_\_\_ pray and not \_\_\_\_\_"

Rate this widow's prayer on the above scale? What phrases in this parable support your view?

Jesus said that he would **not** "delay long", but would respond "quickly" (v. 7b-8a)—so **why** do we need to "not lose heart in prayer"? Why not just "pray once, trust God, and claim your blessing"?

- Pastor Doug noted that prayer often changes **us**, rather than our circumstances. Tell about a **situation** you've been praying about for some time now. How have you seen **yourself** change?

## Application-Challenge

- Pray earnestly.**
- Pray expectantly.**
- Pray persistently in faith.**

Need "effectual, fervent prayer"?  
Then check out:  
[tcc.org/prayer](http://tcc.org/prayer)

## Sermon Summary

Key Texts: 1 Kings 18:41-46 & James 5:16-17

James has more to say proportionately about prayer than any other New Testament writer. What intrigues me is that James chooses Elijah as his role model for prayer. Elijah can be hard to identify with—he was a mighty prophet and a miracle worker. So Elijah would not have been my first choice as a prayer mentor. Yet James says Elijah was a man with a nature like ours (James 5:17)—and from him we learn that effectual, earnest prayer of a righteous person accomplishes much.

**[1] Elijah prayed earnestly** (1 Kings 18:42b). But we might wonder, since God promised rain (see v. 1)—why pray? Prayer doesn't presume on God's promises, it appropriates them. Effectual, earnest prayer is hard work! God often brings us to places of desperation so that we can learn to pray earnestly. Cancer will do that. A wayward child will too. The Greek word translated "effective" in James 5:16 is *energeo*; we get our word "energy" from it. So we are talking about vibrant, energetic prayer often born out of desperation. During such times we are not merely mouthing words, we are crying out to God. Elijah's position, crouched down on the earth, praying with his face between his knees, is reflective of his dependent attitude. He's not playing, he's praying! I am concerned with the lack of reverence with which we come before God. He's not "the man upstairs"; he is the infinite Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Jesus once urged the disciples to pray, but they didn't have the energy for it (Mark 14:34, 37-38). Jesus, on the other hand, had a habit of energetic prayer (Mark 1:35-37). Church, if Jesus needed to pray, what must our need be?! One of the things that disturbs me most is our apathy. Church, we should be on our knees, praying earnestly. Our marriages are on the rocks, our kids are straying, and we're playing video games and watching movies.

**[2] Elijah prayed expectantly** (1 Kings 18:43-45). Elijah wasn't sure when the rain was coming, but he knew that it would come. So seven times he sent his servant to check on the outcome. (Sometimes we even doubt God's answers after they arrive—see Acts 12:5, 13-16!) Elijah shows us that the kind of prayer that pleases God persists and believes, even when the evidence for such faith seems absent. Faith persists in prayer, believing that the answer is coming, when you are confident that your request is within the will of God. Maybe you've been praying a long time for something and have given up. Go and look again, and perhaps there will arise a little cloud (v. 44a).

**[3] Elijah shows that effectual prayer brings great blessing to situations and people** (v. 45-46a). Jesus modeled this. In Matthew 9:36-38, Jesus told the disciples to pray for laborers—and then in the very next verse, the pray-ers themselves became the answer to their own prayers! Unfortunately, every church has two kinds of people, the pillars, who do the work of the ministry, and the caterpillars, who crawl in and out each week.

People will show up for a concert, a conference on marriage or parenting—but a prayer meeting? A few will come, but it is never the high attendance event. Why is that? Because Satan knows that if he can keep us from praying, he can keep us from changing. "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much" (James 5:16). Church, we are living in an arid and desolate generation that needs the rain of God to fall upon it. And it will—if God's people will pray.

### 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

***“Five Question Bible Study” (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage or topic.  
We can use it to explore “effectual, fervent prayer”...***

**Monday**—Read 1 John 5:14-15. Can we **know** that our prayers will be answered? If so, **how?**

**Tuesday**—Read Hebrews 11:6 & James 4:2-4. How can we know that God **won’t** answer us?

**Wednesday**—Read Exodus 32:9-14. Does prayer **really matter**, does it **make any difference**?

**Thursday**—Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. So—**does** prayer make any difference? If so, **what?**

**Friday**—Read Psalm 66:18 & Proverbs 15:8 & 29. What is the connection of obedience to prayer?

**Saturday**—***In preparation for worshipping our risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,***  
read 1 Kings 19.

Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?

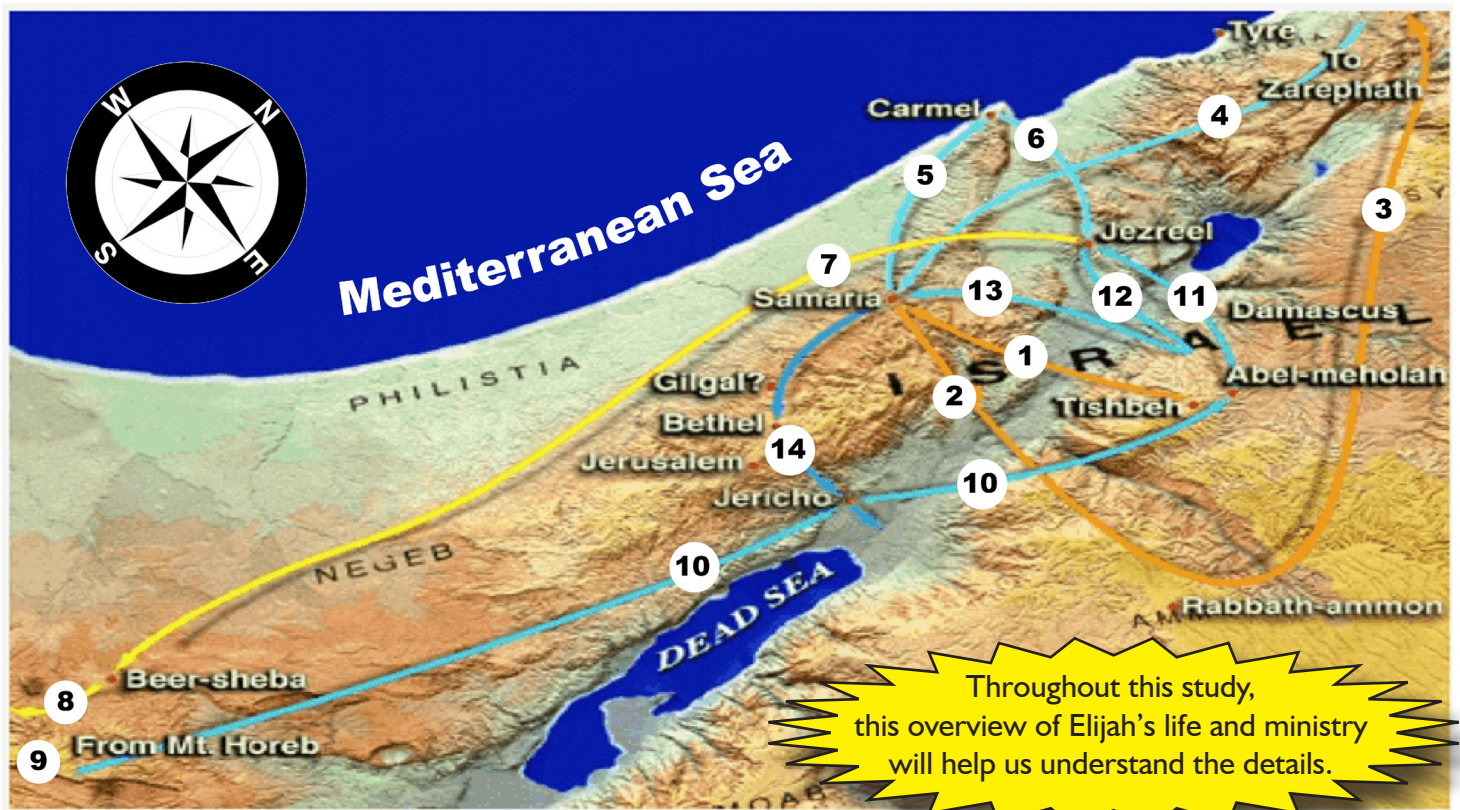


What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]





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)