

Text: I Kings 17:1; James 5:17,18

Elijah

Some facts about him:

- He was a Tishbite – I Kings 17:1
- His name means My God is Yahweh
- He was a hairy man wearing a clothes of leather – II Kings 1:8
- He prayed to stop the rain for 3 ½ years – I Kings 17:1
- He raised the widow of Zaephath's son – I Kings 17:17-24
- He was taken to heaven by a chariot of fire - II Kings 2:11

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a reason why Elijah's presence dominates not only the Old Testament but also the New Testament as well – he was an unique and powerful voice for God Almighty. His name is mentioned in the New Testament some 30 times and he is visually seen with Jesus and Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration – Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8 and Luke 9:28-36 – Why???

It is a picture that Jesus is the main theme between the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) – Luke 16:16-18; Matthew 5:17.

So let's examine five outstanding features that characterize Elijah and why he is such an important figure in the Bible.

I. PECULAR APPEARANCE – II KINGS 1:7,8

He was a person that would be easily picked out of the crowd. He was a hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist. He was much like the John the Baptist in the New Testament – as many thought that John the Baptist was Elijah based on his attire – John 1:21.

II. PLACE AMONG THE PROPHETS

Elijah was known through out the Bible, because of his power with God. Here are a couple of references in the Bible about him:

-Malachi 4:5,6 – The Lord promised to send him back during the great tribulation to preach the Word and turn folks to the Lord. Revelation 11:3-12

-Luke 1:17 – Even John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way for Jesus.

-James 5:17,18 – Is commended for his effective and fervent prayers to the Lord.

III. POWER SOURCE AGAINST EVIL

During his time the country was ruled by a king and queen (Ahab and Jezebel) that was corrupted and lead the people into idolatry. So Elijah stood up to these forces of evil.

Here are three examples:

-He confronted king Ahab about his sin and that there will be no rain for 3 ½ years – I Kings 17:1

-He confronted the false prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel to have fire fall from heaven – I Kings 18

-He confronted king Ahab about killing Naboth for his vineyard – I Kings 21:17-19

-He confronted Jezebel's about her sins and proclaimed her death – I Kings 21:23

We should be strong in the Lord and to stand and fight against the evils of the devil – Ephesians 6:11

IV. PHYSICAL RATURE TO HEAVEN

One of the unique things about Elijah was that he was physically raptured (taken away) by the Lord – The Lord had a chariot of fire with a whirlwind ready for him to take him to heaven – II Kings 2:11.

This is a prototype or picture, how the Lord will come again for his bride in the Rapture – I Corinthians 15:52; I Thessalonians 4:16-18; Revelation 3:10

ARE YOU READY???

V. PROMINENCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Even though he was an Old Testament prophet, He was also a prominent presence in the New Testament. There are at least 25 other references to him in the New Testament. There are two incidents that illustrated this truth:

- At Mount Transfiguration – Matthew 17:4; Mark 9:5; Luke 9:33 – Peter seen Moses and Elijah with Jesus in their glorified state and Peter (being a Jew knew about Moses and Elijah were special characters) thought it would be great to build a tabernacle for each of them. But God spoke and said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him”. The focused was turned back to the Lord Jesus.
- At Mount Calvary – Matthew 27:26 - the Jews that was present looked for Elijah when Jesus cried out, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani”. You see they were looking for Elijah (because thr Jews knew about him) instead of the true meaning of what Jesus cried out.

Conclusion:

The book of James compares the average Christian with the prophet Elijah, will leave most believers shaking their head. Many Christians suggest they have the faith of Elijah, yet these scriptures point that we need to have the faith of Elijah.

