

Elijah

FIRE & RAIN

Psalm 63:8 “Follow hard”

My soul *clings* to you. ESV/NIV/NASB

My soul *followeth hard* after thee; Thy right hand upholdeth me. KJV

Dabaq (Hebrew) – to cling, closely pursue, deeply attached, follow closely, holding fast, steadfast, stick together

Passion Principle

a heart deeply attached

**“Guard your heart with all
diligence, for from it flow the
springs of life.”** Proverbs 4:23

Snapshot 1: Heart Reflections

Whole-hearted devotion

Seek the Lord with a whole heart and you will find him (Deuteronomy 4:29)

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13)

Seek first the kingdom of God (Matt 6:33)

Obedience

“... he made David their king. He testified concerning him: ‘I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.’” (Acts 13:22)

Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart. (Psalm 119:34)

Return..., and I will give you shepherds after my own heart (Jeremiah 3:15)

Disobedience

A man does what is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the heart (Proverbs 21:2)

To Saul: “The Lord sought out a man after his own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14)

Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the LORD, ..., with all his heart... (2 Kings 10: 31)

...Stubbornly followed their own hearts, gone after Baals (Jeremiah 9:14)

The heart is deceitful and wicked above all things (Jer 17:9)

Passion
Principle

Prayers reveal the heart

Suffering and Patience - James 5 ESV

¹⁵ And **the prayer of faith** will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. **The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.** ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and **he prayed fervently** that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. ¹⁸ Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and **the earth bore its fruit.**

Passion Principle

A prayer attitude

Righteous living

The prayer of a righteous person has great power *as it is working* James 5:16

Fervor / perseverance

Elijah prayed fervently. He prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit James 5:17

Faith

The prayer of faith James 5:15

Snapshot 2: Faith

Christ calls out *faith* in the hearts of people

- Oh ye of little faith? Peter's water walk (Matt 14:31)
- Boy with a demon – why could we not cast out? Little faith (Matthew 17:19-20)
- Woman who touched his garment, “your faith has made you well” (Mark 5:28-34)
- Centurian – Christ “marveled at his faith” (Matthew 8:8-10)

Introduction to Elijah

Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab,
“As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand,
there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by
my word.” **1 Kings 17:1**

Ahab's heritage - 1 Kings 16

²⁵ Omri did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did **more evil than all who were before him.** ²⁶ For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in the sins that **he made Israel to sin**, provoking the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger **by their idols.**

³⁰ And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, **more than all who were before him.** ³¹ And as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and **served Baal and worshiped him.** ³² He **erected an altar for Baal** in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. ³³ And **Ahab made an Asherah.** Ahab did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

Ahab's wife Jezebel - 1 Kings 16

Ahab's aim was to seal a pact with Phoenicia (Tyre) for **profitable political reasons**.

His trust was in his own schemes rather than in the Lord.

Married **Jezebel** – from Phoenicia/Sidon (Lebanon), daughter of the king.

- Ahab allowed Jezebel's influence to **introduce the worship of the satanic and idolatrous cult of Baal-Melqart** into Israel.
- David stamped it out, but now larger than ever, it became an Israelite institution.
- Jezebel was persistent and highly dominant, held influence over Ahab.
- **Jezebel did not want Baalism to coexist with the worship of Yahweh.**
- She wanted to completely **stamp out the worship of God.**
- **Jezebel slaughtered every prophet** she could get her hands on (1 Kgs. 18:4).
- Assembled her cabinet – 400 Asherah/450 Baal (1 Kgs. 18:19)

Archaeological text of the Ugarit people

The Ras Shamrah text, an important archaeological find, praises **Baal** as **the god who has power over rain**, wind, clouds, and therefore over fertility. Baal was also worshipped as **the weather god, the god of storm, of rain and good crops**. [Bible.org](https://www.bible.org)

Asherah, was venerated as the mother goddess, symbolizing fertility and nurturing, and she held a significant place in **household rituals** and temple worship.

Ras Shamra: Archaeological Significance and Ugaritic Texts

[DivineNarratives.org](https://www.DivineNarratives.org)

Context Snapshot - Biblical Chronology of Idolatry

- Genesis 31:34 Rachel steals Laban's house gods
- Genesis 35:2 – Jacob said to his household “put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves...”
- Ex. 20: 1st & 2nd commandment -Love the LORD with all your heart
-Have no god before me
- Exodus 23:24-26 before the covenant with Moses. “When the angel of the Lord brings you before the Canaanites...(and other nations), do not bow down to their gods or serve them”
- Exodus 23:32 Make no covenant with them or their gods, they will not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me... it will be a snare
- Exodus 32, Moses comes down, then worship of golden calf
- Exodus 34:13-14 tear down the Asherim. ...for the LORD whose name is Jealous is a jealous God

Covenant – Rewards & Punishment: land, rain, and crops

- **Lev. 26:1-4** I will give you rains in their season and the land will yield its increase

- **Leviticus 26:18-20**

I will punish you for your sins *seven times over*. I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze. Your strength will be spent in vain, because your soil will not yield its crops, nor will the trees of the land yield their fruit.”

- **Deuteronomy 11:13 -17**

:14 He will give the rain for your land in its season...

:16 Take care (not to) serve other gods

:17 *He will shut up the heavens*, ...be no rain... Solomon

- **Deut. 16:21** No planting of Asherim or pillars- Wooden symbols of female deity

- **1 Kings 8:35-36 Solomon's temple dedication**

“When the heavens are shut up and there is *no rain because your people have sinned against you*, ...then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and *send rain on the land* you gave your people for an inheritance.”

Drive out all inhabitants from the land...

⁵⁰ And the Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, saying, ⁵¹ “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you pass over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ⁵² then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you and destroy all their figured stones and destroy all their metal images and demolish all their high places. ⁵³ And you shall take possession of the land and settle in it, for I have given the land to you to possess it. ⁵⁴ You shall inherit the land by lot according to your clans. To a large tribe you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small tribe you shall give a small inheritance. Wherever the lot falls for anyone, that shall be his. According to the tribes of your fathers you shall inherit. ⁵⁵ But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those of them whom you let remain shall be as barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall trouble you in the land where you dwell. ⁵⁶ And I will do to you as I thought to do to them.” **Numbers 33:50-56**

II Chronicles 7:13-15

When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and **pray** and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will **forgive their sin and heal their land**.

Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the **prayer that is made in this place**.

Character development

Idolatry – an entry point for strongholds to take effect, leads to demonic activity
Our prayers are not effective for God when **supplements** (sins) are present.

Ahab: sold his soul for material gain, followed Jezebel's influence, led Isreal into idolatry

Jezebel: evil heart, intent on murder to drive out the God of Isreal

Elijah: a righteous man, sought God and pleaded with the people to return to the LORD

Isreal: a passive people, forgetful of God's covenant increasingly tolerant and
accepting of idolatry

Prophets of Baal: They beat themselves up over it and die first.

Elijah: the original trash-talker

To Isreal: You wafflers... ²⁰ “How long will you go limping between two different opinions?”

²¹ “If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.”
And the people did not answer him a word.

To Baal’s prophets: ²⁷ Elijah mocked them, saying, “Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself”

1 Kings 18

1 Kings 18:36-37

³⁶ And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that *you are God in Israel*, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things *at your word*.

³⁷ Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that *you, O LORD, are God*, and that you have turned their hearts back.”

1 Kings 18:39-40

³⁸ Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹ And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, “The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God.”

⁴⁰ And Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape.” And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there.

1 Kings 18:41-45

⁴¹ And Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of the rushing of rain.” ⁴² So Ahab went up to eat and to drink.

And Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. And he bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees.

⁴³ And he said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” And he went up and looked and said, “There is nothing.” And he said, “Go again,” seven times.

⁴⁴ And at the seventh time he said, “Behold, a little cloud like a man's hand is rising from the sea.” And he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.’” ⁴⁵ And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain...

Passion Principle

Reverence

Christ prayed multiple times

“All night he continued in prayer” **Luke 6:12**

“Prayed 3x...same words” **Matthew 26:36-46**

Christ prayed earnestly (Luke 22:44)

“...he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat became like great drops of blood”

Reverence(Hebrews 6:7)

“...Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, loud cries and tears and he was heard **because of his reverence.**”

Questions on my passion for prayer

- What is my posture of prayer (physical & spiritual)?
- Do I treat prayer as one-and-done, or persevere?
- Am I praying in faith?
- Am I practicing reverence when I approach the throne?
Or do I rush in?