

# **Standing for God When No One Else Will: Lessons from Elijah's Bold Faith**

In a world where compromise seems easier than conviction, the story of the prophet Elijah offers a powerful reminder of what it means to stand for God regardless of the cost. Elijah's ministry began during one of the darkest periods in Israel's history, yet his unwavering faith changed everything.

## **What Was Happening When Elijah Appeared?**

To understand Elijah's courage, we must first understand the context of his ministry. The nation of Israel had split into two kingdoms after King Solomon's reign. The northern kingdom, consisting of ten tribes with its capital in Samaria, was ruled by a succession of wicked kings.

### **The Reign of Evil Kings**

During the 200-year span of the northern kingdom, nineteen different kings ruled, and every single one is described in Scripture with the same phrase: "He did evil in the eyes of the Lord." The situation grew progressively worse with each generation.

King Omri, Ahab's father, "did evil in the eyes of the Lord and sinned more than all of those before him" (1 Kings 16:25 ESV). But when Ahab took the throne, Scripture tells us he "did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him" (1 Kings 16:30 ESV).

### **The Influence of Jezebel**

Ahab's wickedness was amplified by his marriage to Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians. Jezebel had a clear agenda: to make Baal worship the official religion of Israel. She supported 850 prophets of Baal at her table while systematically murdering the prophets of God.

The Bible says, "There was never a man like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel, his wife" (1 Kings 21:25 ESV). While Ahab may have held the title of king, Jezebel wielded the real power.

## **How Did Elijah Respond to This Darkness?**

Into this spiritual wasteland stepped a man whose very name was a declaration of faith. Elijah means "my God is Yahweh" - a bold statement in a land where Baal worship was being forced upon the people.

### **A Courageous Confrontation**

"Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, 'As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word'" (1 Kings 17:1 ESV).

Imagine this scene: Elijah appears seemingly out of nowhere and walks directly into the presence of King Ahab. By his very name and message, he was risking his life. Yet he boldly declared that the God of Israel - not Baal, the supposed god of rain and fertility - controlled the weather.

## **Why Do We Struggle to Stand for God?**

What keeps us from being the men and women God has called us to be? Often, it's one simple word: fear. We fear what people might say, what they might think, or what standing for God might cost us.

### **The Fear of Man vs. The Fear of God**

The most common fear warned against in Scripture is the fear of man. The psalmist reminds us, "The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" (Psalm 118:6 ESV).

Elijah understood this truth. He knew the Lord was with him, and therefore he had nothing to lose. This gave him the courage to stand alone when everyone else had compromised.

## **What Can We Learn from Elijah's Example?**

### **Choose This Day Whom You Will Serve**

Elijah declared, "As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve." He refused to serve any other gods or bow to human pressure. The question for us is simple: What god do you serve?

God will not tolerate a multiplicity of gods in your life. Jesus said, "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money" (Matthew 6:24 ESV).

Money isn't the only false god we face. There's the god of pleasure, power, prestige, vanity, popularity, and even perfection. We must choose daily whom we will serve.

### **Recognize Generational Sin Patterns**

The progression from Omri to Ahab to Ahaziah shows how sin patterns can travel through generations. Each generation became more wicked than the last, influenced by the examples set before them.

This reminds us that our children learn more from how we live than from what we teach. How you live for God carries greater weight than what you say about God.

## Understand the Power of Prayer

James tells us that "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" (James 5:17 ESV).

Elijah was just like us, yet he prayed earnestly and saw God move in powerful ways. He took God at His word and prayed boldly, asking God to fulfill His promises.

## How Should This Change How We Pray?

Are you praying earnestly for the hearts and lives of your children and grandchildren? Are you asking God for opportunities to share your faith? Are you praying bold prayers, asking God to do something big?

Too often our prayers fall short of what God is capable of doing. Elijah prayed with faith, hope, and confidence because he knew his God was a way maker who could do anything.

## Life Application

This week, choose to stand for God even when it's difficult. Like Elijah, whose very name declared his allegiance to the Lord, let your life be a bold declaration of whom you serve. Don't let fear of man keep you from being the person God has called you to be.

Consider these questions as you reflect on Elijah's example:

- What false gods am I tempted to serve instead of the one true God?
- How is my life demonstrating to my family and others whom I truly serve?
- What bold prayers is God calling me to pray, trusting Him to do something big?
- Where do I need courage to take a stand for God, regardless of what others might think?

Remember, God is always working to save His people, even when circumstances look dire. He's looking for men and women who will stand for Him when no one else will. Will you be that person?