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## Ain't Gonna Rain No More

Lesson 5 • 1Kings 17:1

ELIJAH the RIGHTEOUS PROPHET from YAHWEH Versus AHAB the REBELLIOUS KING for BAAL	
A Man Sent from God	A Message Spoken for God
Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead... "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand,	said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."
Prophets Are Covenant Mediators Who Protect & Serve Elijah stands in God's Presence on Behalf of the People	Prophets Are Covenant Mediators Who Protect & Serve Elijah stands in Ahab's Presence on Behalf of the LORD

Prophets were **Covenant Mediators/Protectors** sent by Israel's Promise Keeping God who **Confronted Covenant Breakers** and **Comforted Covenant Keepers...**  
by **Foretelling** (predicting) the future fulfillment of God's promises of judgment and salvation  
and  
by **Forthtelling** (preaching) His people to repent before judgment falls and to remain loyal until deliverance comes!

### What Kind of Message Was Spoken by Elijah?

#### 1. A Message of Divine REVELATION.

Elijah...said to Ahab, "As **the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely**

- Elijah is delivering a divine revelation on behalf of the living God, the promise-keeping LORD, the covenant-making God of Israel.
  - 1) His appearance is **not introduced** but it should not be **unexpected!** [See Handout Kings vs Prophets]
  - 2) His role as a prophet is **not explained** but it should be **understood!** Deuteronomy 18:15-19
- Elijah is a prophet who is sent from Yahweh and who stands in His presence to receive **HIS WORDS**.

"The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My Name, I myself will require it of him.'" Deuteronomy 18:17-19

#### 2. A Message of Prophetic CONVICTION.

Elijah...said to Ahab, "**As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely...**"

- Elijah is swearing a "Divine Oath" – a "**PROPHETIC PROMISE**" before the living God and King Ahab.
- These "**I swear to the living God**" promises are found **14x** in 1-2Kings in various forms by various people: 1Kings 1:29; 2:24; 17:1, 12; 18:10, 15; 22:14; 2Kings 2:2, 4, 6; 3:14; 4:30; 5:16, 20

"But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die." Deuteronomy 18:18-20

#### 3. A Message of Future PREDICTION.

Elijah...said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, **surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word,**"

- As the LORD's prophet, Elijah does **BOTH** foretelling and forthtelling!

*"You may say in your heart, 'How will we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him."*  
Deuteronomy 18:21-22

**Just How Radical is This Future Prediction: "It Ain't Gonna Rain No More Until I Say So!"**

- 1) No dew or rain
- 2) These years
- 3) Except by my word

- As the LORD's prophet, Elijah is predicting the **PROMISED** judgment of the covenant-making, promise-keeping God of Israel.

*"It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the **EARLY** and **LATE RAIN**, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil. He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied. **Beware that your hearts are not deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them. Or the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.**"* Deuteronomy 11:8-28

*"The heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed."* Deuteronomy 28:23-24

**What Does "These Years" Mean?**

- 1) There had already been no rain for 6 months more than likely due to the summer dry season.
- 2) There would now be no dew or rain for 3 more years until the LORD tells Elijah otherwise. *1Kings 18:1; Luke 4:25; James 5:17*
- 3) *"King Ahab, you and your kingdom are dependent on my word as the prophet of the LORD!"*

## HERESY ALERT!

"Christian readers typically misunderstand prophecy in the Bible because they assume that its primary intent is to foretell the future. This chapter shows that the intent of the genre of prophecy in the Hebrew Bible was not primarily to predict the future—certainly not hundreds of years in advance—but rather to address specific social, political, and religious circumstances in ancient Israel and Judah. This means that there is no prediction of Christ in the Hebrew Bible. The writers of the New Testament and later Christian literature reinterpreted or reapplied the Hebrew prophecies. This is not to disparage these later Christian authors, however, for they were participating in a long-standing process of reinterpretation that goes back to the prophetic books themselves."

**Steven L. McKenzie**, *How to Read the Bible: History, Prophecy, Literature—Why Modern Readers Need to Know the Difference, and What It Means for Faith Today*

## 4. A Message of Faithful CONFRONTATION.

*The LORD is being faithful to the **GLORY** of His character and the **GOOD** of His covenant people.*

*1Kings 8:35-36; Leviticus 26:14*

## 5. A Message of Gracious INVITATION.

**Why Is This a Gracious Invitation?**

- 1) The LORD **could have already** justly destroyed them.
- 2) The LORD **had already** been extremely longsuffering in not pouring out His wrath on Ahab and the Northern Kingdom.
- 3) The LORD **did not have to** send Elijah with this message of coming judgment on this very wicked king.
- 4) The LORD **graciously chose** to send Elijah with this undeserved, merciful invitation to repent before it was too late and greater judgment fell on King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, and the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

**This Message Is a Gracious Invitation Because the LORD, the Living God of Israel, Is a Gracious God!**

*The LORD descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the LORD. Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."* **Exodus 34:5-7**

*Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. "If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and 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, will forgive their sin and will heal their land."* **2Chronicles 7:12-14**

**Aren't You Glad "Yahweh Is Our God!"?**

## Lessons to Learn and Live | A Message from Our Gracious God of Coming Judgment

(or Why We Don't Unhitch from the Old Testament!)

- ☐ We don't need prophets or the gift of prophecy today, we just need bold Christ followers, faithful local churches, and godly pastors to graciously use the sufficient, inspired, inerrant Word of God. *2Timothy 3:15-17*
- ☐ Seeing people come to repentance requires both speaking the Word to them and praying the Word for them. *James 5:16-18*
- ☐ The LORD is still warning rebels of His coming, certain judgment because He does not desire that any should perish but all come to repentance. *2Peter 3:8-12*
- ☐ Run to the true King, Jesus Christ, before His wrath justly falls on all who reject Him and the rule of His Word over their lives. He has fulfilled the Old Covenant promises and commands, so that anyone who places their faith in Him can receive the New Covenant blessing of the indwelling Spirit who writes God's Law on our hearts. *2Corinthians 1:17-21; 2Corinthians 3:2-6*
- ☐ The LORD Jesus has willingly suffered God's wrath on the cross in the place of rebel sinners like us, died the death we deserve, and rose victoriously to grant gracious deliverance to all who repent of their sin and trust completely in Him and Him alone as their sinless High Priest, their righteous Prophet, and their sovereign King! *Hebrews 9:15; 1Corinthians 11:23-26*

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### Divine Oaths: "As the LORD Lives" with Variations in 1-2 Kings

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|-----|------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1.  | 1Kgs 1:29  | King David              | 28 Then King David said, "Call Bathsheba to me." And she came into the king's presence and stood before the king. 29 The king vowed and said, " <b>As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress, 30 surely as I vowed to you by the LORD the God of Israel, saying,</b> 'Your son Solomon shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place'; I will indeed do so this day." 31 Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground, and prostrated herself before the king and said, "May my lord King David live forever." |
| 2.  | 1Kgs 2:24  | King Solomon            | 23 Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, "May God do so to me and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life. 24 "Now therefore, <b>as the LORD lives, who has established me and set me on the throne of David my father and who has made me a house as He promised, surely</b> Adonijah shall be put to death today." 25 So King Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him so that he died.  |
| 3.  | 1Kgs 17:1  | Prophet Elijah          | Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, " <b>As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely</b> there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."  |
| 4.  | 1Kgs 17:12 | Widow of Zarephath      | But she said, " <b>As the LORD your God lives,</b> I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die."  |
| 5.  | 1Kgs 18:10 | Steward Obadiah         | " <b>As the LORD your God lives,</b> there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent to search for you; and when they said, 'He is not <i>here</i> ,' he made the kingdom or nation swear that they could not find you.   |
| 6.  | 1Kgs 18:15 | Prophet Elijah          | Elijah said, " <b>As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand,</b> I will surely show myself to him today."  |
| 7.  | 1Kgs 22:14 | Prophet Micaiah         | But Micaiah said, " <b>As the LORD lives, what the LORD says to me, that I shall speak.</b> "  |
| 8.  | 2Kings 2:2 | Prophet Elisha          | Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here please, for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, " <b>As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.</b> " So they went down to Bethel. (1x)  |
| 9.  | 2Kgs 2:4   | Prophet Elisha          | Elijah said to him, "Elisha, please stay here, for the LORD has sent me to Jericho." But he said, " <b>As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.</b> " So they came to Jericho. (2x)  |
| 10. | 2Kgs 2:6   | Prophet Elisha          | Then Elijah said to him, "Please stay here, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." And he said, " <b>As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.</b> " So the two of them went on. (3x)   |
| 11. | 2Kgs 3:14  | Prophet Elisha          | Elisha said, " <b>As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand,</b> were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look at you nor see you.   |
| 12. | 2Kgs 4:30  | Shunammite Woman        | The mother of the lad said, " <b>As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.</b> " And he arose and followed her.  |
| 13. | 2Kgs 5:16  | Prophet Elisha          | But he said, " <b>As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will take nothing.</b> " And he urged him to take <i>it</i> , but he refused.  |
| 14. | 2Kgs 5:20  | Elisha's Servant Gehazi | But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought, "Behold, my master has spared this Naaman the Aramean, by not receiving from his hands what he brought. <b>As the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him.</b> "   |