



Elijah: Prophet of Courage

1 Kings 18:5-18

Background

Obadiah – "Servant of God"

- Faithful believer in Jehovah, the true and living God
- A brave man who stood for God and His prophets in a difficult time.
- Held a position of trust and responsibility: Governor, mayor, and a top official in Ahab's administration

Background

Elijah

- Prophesied from about 869 to 838 BC
- His ministry began after the split of the nation into two kingdoms (931 BC):
 - Israel (the northern kingdom)
 - Judah (the southern kingdom)

Background

King Ahab

- Ruled in northern Israel (874–853 BC)
- Considered one of Israel's most disobedient and rebellious kings.
- His reign was characterized by economic prosperity, at least at the outset
- His reign was also a time of spiritual poverty

Background

King Ahab

- He married Jezebel, although God's law commanded not to marry adherents of false gods or practice their customs (Leviticus 20:23; 2 Kings 17:145)
- He led Israel to worship Baal and Asherah, although God's law clearly commanded never to worship false gods (Exodus 20:3, Deuteronomy 5:7)

Background

King Ahab

- He refused to listen when Elijah and Elisha warned him
- Elijah, God's prophet, confronted King Ahab; announced a drought to come upon the land because of the nation's sin (1 King 17:1-7)
- After Elijah's prophesy of the drought, the Lord ordered him to go hide at the brook Cherith.

Background

King Ahab

- He refused to listen when Elijah and Elisha warned him
- Elijah confronted King Ahab; announced a drought to come upon the land because of the nation's sin (1 King 17:1-7).
- King Ahab and Jezebel were never stirred to repentance by the famine

Background

Jezebel

- Married to King Ahab
- Daughter of a foreign king
- Devout worshipper of the god Baal
- Contributed to idolatry in Israel

Background

First Kings 17 begins with the sudden appearance of Elijah. He boldly proclaimed that “there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word” (17:1).

After Elijah's prophesy of the drought, the Lord ordered Elijah to go hide at the brook Cherith, so Elijah went into hiding for a time.

Outline

1 Kings 18:1-4

- I. God's Providence (1 Kings 18:5-8)
- II. God's Servant, Obadiah (1 Kings 18:9-16)
- III. God's Prophet, Elijah (1 Kings 18:17-18)

1 Kings 18:1-4

- The drought lasted three-and-one-half years **by the fervent prayer of Elijah.**
- Earlier, God told Elijah to **hide** himself. Now it was time to **present** himself.
- There is a time to hide and be alone with God, and there is also a time to present yourself to the world.
- The drought did not begin or end as a result of Elijah's will, but at God's will.

1 Kings 18:1-4

- In the center of rebellion against God there was one who remained devoted to God

God's Providence

1 Kings 18:5-8

- Ahab scouts the land for food and water.
- Does Ahab seem concerned about the lives of his people?
- Seeking for grass, instead of seeking for God!

God's Providence

1 Kings 18:5-8

- Elijah is on his way to deliver a challenge from God to King Ahab
- Obadiah is on his way to scout for grazing land for the animals
- **Through divine providence**, they meet each other on the road.
- God arranged this unexpected meeting between Obadiah and the prophet Elijah.

God's Providence

1 Kings 18:5-8

- Obadiah is anxious and fearful
- Elijah is confident and bold

God's Servant, Obadiah

1 Kings 18:9-16

- Obadiah was sure Elijah was pronouncing his death sentence.
- Obadiah gives a testimony of his faith
- Elijah gives an unwavering Promise

How does a person put the brakes on his or her imagination to keep it from running wild and paralyzing action?

When was a time that fear of a hypothetical outcome stopped you in your tracks?

God's Prophet, Elijah

1 Kings 18:17-18

- Ahab immediately cast the blame for Israel's woes on Elijah.
- King Ahab would not accept responsibility for his nation's suffering.
- Israel was suffering because of failed leadership.

Into the Word

	Obadiah	Elijah
1–What God called him to do		
2–How he responded to God’s call		
3–Why God’s call required courage		
4–I personally identify with him because . . .		

Points to Ponder

- Courage has always been the trademark of God's spokespeople.
- Like Elijah, faithful prophets continued to proclaim courageously and lead according to the Lord's words.
- And like Elijah, these prophets were considered troublemakers.

Application

In many parts of the world today, an increased measure of courage is required to preach and teach the gospel.

Let us pray for these faithful servants of the Lord, that they may be **established**, **strengthened**, **settled** (1 Peter 5:10), and **empowered** with the courage that has always characterized God's people in an often hostile world.



Next Sunday School Lesson

Salvation is Sealed
Luke 24:13-16, 22-35