



“I shall always be ready to remind you of these things...”
2 Peter 1:21

A Man With A Nature Like Ours, Introduction

By Alex Hale

In Matthew 17, Jesus was transfigured. Three of Jesus’ disciples – Peter, James, and John – were there. In addition, two figures from the Old Testament were present – Moses and Elijah. Following the transfiguration, the disciples asked Jesus questions about Elijah, and Jesus answered their questions by connecting Elijah with John the Baptist. Certainly Elijah was a great prophet.

- Robert Young, in his *Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, calls Elijah “the grandest and the most romantic character that Israel ever produced.”
 - Keil and Delitzsch refer to Elijah as the “mightiest of all the prophets.”
 - John Wesley wrote that Elijah was “the most eminent of all the prophets.”
- However, Elijah is described as “*a man with a nature like ours*” (James 5:17).
- Adam Clarke has written that Elijah was “of the same constitution, a human being just as ourselves are.”
 - In his commentary, Albert Barnes refers to Elijah as “a mere man, subject to the same weaknesses and infirmities as other men.”

Elijah was a mysterious individual whose life engendered many questions. His life was action-packed, and could be characterized by many climactic scenes. Elijah also experienced periods of discouragement and even depression. In our next few articles, I want to consider with you the life and ministry of Elijah, and hopefully make some applications for our own lives as we work for the Lord.

What do we know about Elijah?

- *His name.* The name Elijah means “Yahweh is my God” (Barnes). In the New Testament, some translations (such as KJV) render his name as “*Elias*.”
- *His origin.* The Jamieson-Faussett-Brown (JFB) Commentary says of Elijah, “This prophet is introduced as abruptly as Melchizedek – his birth, parents, and call to the prophetic office being alike unrecorded.” Elijah is called a Tishbite, and said to be of the inhabitants of Gilead (1 Kings 17:1). However, there is debate as to where exactly this was.
- *His appearance.* 2 Kings 1:7-8 tells us that he was a hairy man who wore a leather belt around his waist. This sounds a lot like the appearance of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:4). Clarke explains it by writing, “...he wore a rough garment, either made of camels’ hair, as his successor John [the] Baptist’s was, or he wore a skin dressed with the hair on. Some think that the meaning is, he had very long hair and a long beard. The ancient prophets all wore rough garments, or upper coats made of the skins of beasts: They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins... (Hebrews 11:37).” Barnes writes, “His costume was that of a thorough ascetic. Generally the Jews wore girdles of linen or cotton stuff, soft and comfortable. Under the girdle they wore one or two long linen gowns or shirts, and over these they had sometimes a large shawl. Elijah had only his leather girdle and his sheepskin cape or ‘mantle.’” Even in his day, Elijah would have been considered eccentric.

The story of Elijah shows us the “good, bad, and ugly” of one’s life when he or she serves God. Obeying the Lord does not make everything easy, and it does not solve all of our problems. However, with faith, like Elijah, we can accomplish great things.

[To be continued]



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Sunday

Bible Classes – 9:00 am
 Worship – 10:00 am, 5:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Classes – 7:00 pm

Our Elders

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 Norman Kemper

Our Deacons

Troy Hunter
 Kelly Kendall
 Tony Ramick

Our Preacher

Alex Hale