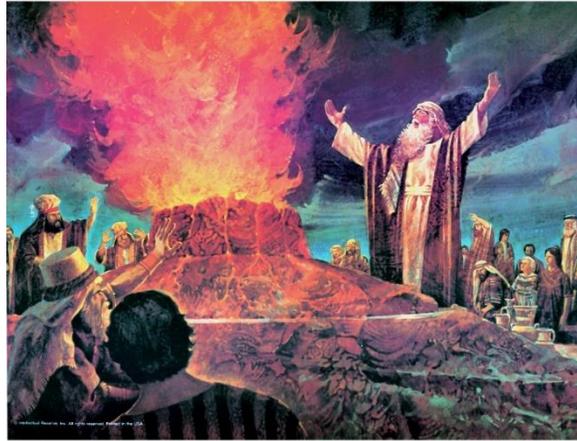


Heb. 11 Heroes of faith Study

Rabbin Deborah Brandt

Elijah and Elisha The Power Prophets



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Hebrews 11:1-3, 6, 32-38

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of realities not seen.

Heb 11:2 For by it the elders received commendation.

Heb 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen did not come from anything visible.

Heb 11:6 Now without faith it is impossible to please God. For the one who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Hebrews 11:1-3, 6, 32-38

Heb 11:32 And what more shall I say? For time would fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets.

Heb 11:33 By faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,

Heb 11:34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, and made foreign armies flee.

Heb 11:35 Women received their dead raised back to life; and others were tortured, after not accepting release, so they might obtain a better resurrection.

Heb 11:36 Others experienced the trial of mocking and scourging—yes, and even chains and prison.

Heb 11:37 They were stoned, they were sawed in two, they were murdered with the sword. They went around in sheepskins and goatskins; they were destitute, afflicted, mistreated.

Heb 11:38 The world was not worthy of them! They wandered around in deserts and mountains, caves and holes in the ground.

Biography of Elijah/Eliyahu

The most beloved prophet of all; with whom the future redemption of Israel through Messiah is closely linked; who frequently comes down to earth to help Jews in distress or reveal some secrets of the divine Torah to our great scholars; who is present at the covenant with G-d entered into by the Jewish child at the age of eight days; who visits us at the 'Seder' - this is our prophet Elijah! Nissan Mindel

1. Elijah's name (Heb. *'ēliyyāhū* [less often *'ēliyyâ*] = "my God is Yahweh") intimates his program, and the story of his ministry goes hand in hand with his historical figure. He was a champion of exclusive Yahweh worship in the time of Ahab (871–852 b.c.) and Ahaziah (852–851) of Israel. According to 1 Kgs. 17:1 he was from Tishbe in Gilead (site uncertain). The secret of his person and the very threatening nature of his appearance made him the crystallization point for an increasingly legendary literary and theological tradition, whose development has not been fully explained. It probably arose out of the trial by sacrifice in 1 Kgs. 18:21–39 and the story of the death of Ahaziah in 2 Kgs. 1:2–17.

Elijah was an uncompromising worshiper of Yahweh. He opposed the religious policy of the house of Omri both in foreign affairs (the marriage with the Phoenician Jezebel) and in domestic affairs (in relation to Canaanite sections of the population). He posed the sharp alternative of → Yahweh or Baal. Over against the functional → polytheism of Ahaziah, he set the claim of Yahweh to every sphere of life in → Israel (§1).¹

The Cup of Elijah

An important thing on the Passover table is a cup reserved for a very special guest. This cup is called the Cup of Elijah because it is reserved for Elijah. This practice actually started with a debate among the rabbis whether one should drink four or five cups of wine. Finally, they reached a compromise. Only four cups would actually be drunk, but there would be a fifth cup on the table that was not drunk "until Elijah comes" to settle the dispute among the rabbis. In the course of time, the fifth cup was named for Elijah and occupies a place of honor on the table. The cup is set by an empty chair which is also reserved for the Prophet Elijah. The Cup of Elijah is filled with wine between the third and fourth cups. It has become customary that, at the end of the seder service, the youngest son goes outside to see if Elijah is coming. After he comes back and states that Elijah is not coming, it is just about time to draw the seder to a close.²

Based upon Malachi 4:5, Judaism teaches that before the Messiah can come, Elijah the Prophet must come first. They also believe that when Elijah does come, it will be on the first night of Passover. So, just in case this might be the Passover when Elijah comes, the chair and the cup are reserved for him. Every year, of course, he has failed to come, and that is why they conclude the service with the words: "Next year in Jerusalem." Elijah the Prophet has not come this year; and if he has not come this year, it means that the Messiah will not come this year either. And if the Messiah will not come this year, that means the Jews do

¹ Fahlbusch, E., & Bromiley, G. W. (1999-2003). Vol. 2: The encyclopedia of Christianity (81). Grand Rapids, MI; Leiden, Netherlands: Wm. B. Eerdmans; Brill.

² Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (1983). Vol. 114: The Messianic Bible Study Collection (20). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

not get to go back to Jerusalem this year. They will have to wait one more year, and so it is, “Next year in Jerusalem.”

Elijah as the Prophet with Fire

Although Moses and Samuel were true prophets of God, a new era of biblical prophecy began with the fiery Elijah. He called ancient Israel to task for its abominable worship of the Baals. No more exciting narrative is found in all the old Testament than the encounter between Elijah and the Baal priests (1 Kgs. 18). Elijah demonstrated that the Lord is the God who answers with fire. A less-well-known account from 2 Kings 1 further cements Elijah’s reputation as the prophet with fire—both literally and symbolically.³

The king asked them [messengers sent by Israelite king Ahaziah], “What kind of man was it who came to meet you and told you this?”

They replied, “He was man with a garment of hair and with a leather belt around his waist.”

The king said, “That was Elijah the Tishbite.”

Then he sent to Elijah a captain with his company of fifty men. The captain went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, “Man of God the king says, ‘Come down!’ ”

Elijah answered the captain, “If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men!” Then fire fell from heaven and Consumed the captain and his men.—*2 Kings 1:7–10*

We today are living through an era like the days just before Elijah burst on the scene—business as usual, little sense in society that the God of heaven is anything more than one possible religious option. *Worship the God of the Bible if it suits you, but don’t act as if he has any exclusive claim on truth or power, people seem think. In Revelation 11, we meet powerful end-time prophets that recall the days of Elijah.⁴*

The Return of Elijah/Eliyahu

Another event clearly predicted to occur before the Tribulation is the return of Elijah, in Malachi 4:5–6:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.⁵

Verse five pinpoints the return of Elijah as coming before *the Day of Jehovah, namely before the Tribulation. Verse six goes on to describe the nature of Elijah’s ministry when he returns, that of a Jewish family reunion program. The Jewish family unit, strong for so many centuries, has in these last days begun to break down and, according to the prophetic word, will continue to break down. The ministry of Elijah is to restore this unity in preparation for the Second Coming of the Messiah.*

There is a great deal of confusion concerning the relationship of Elijah to John the Baptist. It should be kept in mind that the return of Elijah was never promised before the First Coming of Messiah. Elijah was only

³ Easley, K. H. (1998). Vol. 12: Revelation. Holman New Testament Commentary (187). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁴ Easley, K. H. (1998). Vol. 12: Revelation. Holman New Testament Commentary (187). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁵ Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (2003). The footsteps of the Messiah : A study of the sequence of prophetic events (Rev. ed.) (130). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

promised to come before the Second Coming of Messiah and before the Tribulation itself. However, a forerunner was predicted before the First Coming of Messiah in Malachi 3:1:

Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he comes, says Jehovah of hosts.⁶

The coming of a forerunner before the First Coming of Messiah was also predicted in Isaiah 40:3–5:

The voice of one that cries, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain: and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken it.⁷

John the Baptist was clearly the fulfillment of these passages, as stated in Matthew 3:1–6:

And in those days comes John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of through Isaiah the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight. Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region around about the Jordan; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Matthew 11:7–10 makes the same point:

And as these went their way, Yeshua began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft raiment are in king's houses. But wherefore went ye out? to see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, Who shall prepare your way before you.

The same is true in John 1:23:

He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet.

But while John the Baptist fulfilled those prophecies concerning the forerunner before the First Coming of Messiah, he was not Elijah who was promised before the Second Coming. This becomes clear when all the relevant passages are taken into account.

One important passage bearing on this question is found in John 1:19–23:

And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent unto him from Jerusalem priests and Levites to ask him, Who are you? And he confessed, and denied not; and he confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Are you Elijah? And he said, I am not. Are you the prophet? And he answered, No. They said therefore unto him, Who are you? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What say you of

⁶ Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (2003). *The footsteps of the Messiah : A study of the sequence of prophetic events* (Rev. ed.) (130). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

⁷ Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (2003). *The footsteps of the Messiah : A study of the sequence of prophetic events* (Rev. ed.) (131). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

*yourself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet.*⁸

In this passage John the Baptist makes it clear that he is not Elijah. He never claimed to be Elijah, and when asked, he denied it. He only claimed to be the fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy.

The next passage is found in Matthew 17:9–13:

*And as they were coming down from the mountain, Yeshua commanded them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? And he answered and said, Elijah indeed comes, and shall restore all things: but I say unto you, that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they would. Even so shall the Son of man also suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist.*⁹

In answer to the disciples' question regarding the coming of Elijah, the Messiah first of all states, in the future tense, that Elijah will indeed come to restore all things, which is a strong allusion to his ministry mentioned in Malachi 4:6. But this was a promise in relation to the Second Coming and not the First Coming. Hence, Elijah is yet to come to do the ministry of restoration. The disciples' confusion at this stage was due to the fact that they did not yet understand the twofold coming of the Messiah and were still expecting Messiah to set up the Kingdom at that time. The parallel passage in Mark 9:9–13 adds the point that if Elijah had come before the First Coming and restored all things, then all the prophecies of the sufferings of the First Coming would remain unfulfilled. Elijah will indeed come *first, but first before the Second Coming, not before the First Coming. John the Baptist did not accomplish the ministry of restoration Elijah was to accomplish.*

But then Messiah adds that in one sense John the Baptist was Elijah. In what sense? Two other passages answer that. The first is in Matthew 11:11–14:

Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yea he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah, that is to come.

To understand what is being said, it should be noted that Messiah is preaching the good news of the Kingdom (vv. 11–12). If Israel would receive *it, that is, the Kingdom, then John the Baptist would have fulfilled the function of Elijah and would have accomplished the ministry of restoration. But the Kingdom was rejected, and hence, John the Baptist did not fulfill the function of Elijah; thus, Elijah is yet to come to accomplish the work of restoration.*¹⁰

Called “the prophet”

⁸ Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (2003). *The footsteps of the Messiah : A study of the sequence of prophetic events* (Rev. ed.) (131). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

⁹ Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (2003). *The footsteps of the Messiah : A study of the sequence of prophetic events* (Rev. ed.) (131). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

¹⁰ Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (2003). *The footsteps of the Messiah : A study of the sequence of prophetic events* (Rev. ed.) (131). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

Elijah is considered one of the greatest of the prophets. He is not called a writing prophet because of not leaving any book like the ones from Isaiah to Malachi, but he did write 4 verse (2 ch. 21:12-15)

He is mentioned in the tenach 69 times (17:1-19:21; 21:17-28; 2 ki 1:1-17;2:1-15;3:11;9:36;10:10;17; 2 chr 21:12; mal 4:5)

He is called Elias (Grk form of name) 30 times in the apostolic scriptures/nt (mt. 11:14;16:14; 17:3-12;27:47-49; mk 6:15; 8:28;9:4-13;15:35-36; lk 1:17;4:25-26; 9:8,19,30,33,54; jn 1:21-25; rom 11:2; james 5:17)

Eliyahu – God is YHWH

Elijah's origins- 3 different theories are presented in the Aggadah literature. #1. He belonged to the Tribe of Gad. #2. He was a Benjamite from Jerusalem, identical with the Elijah mentioned in 1 chron. 8:27 and #3. he was a priest. He also led a school of the prophets, known as "the sons of the prophets".

5) Calling of fire from heaven on the altar (1Ki 18:38)

6) Causing it to rain (1Ki 18:45)

7) Prophecy that Ahab's sons would all be destroyed (1Ki 21:22)

8) Prophecy that Jezebel would be eaten by dogs (1Ki 21:23)

9) Prophecy that Ahaziah would die of his illness (2Ki 1:4)

10) Calling fire from heaven upon the first 50 soldiers (2Ki 1:10)

11) Calling fire from heaven upon the second 50 soldiers (2Ki 1:12)

12) Parting of the Jordan (2Ki 2:8)

13) Prophecy that Elisha should have a double portion of his spirit (2Ki 2:10)

14) Being caught up to heaven in a whirlwind (2Ki 2:11) God's intervention

The character of Elijah¹¹

Weaknesses:

Fear (1 Kings 19)- Right after God brought about a great miracle and answered Elijah's prayer on Mt. Carmel, Elijah grew afraid of Jezebel and ran away. This demonstrated a lack of faith in God and His protection. (There are over 300 vs that tell us not to fear).

It usually is after our greatest victory the enemy comes in to steal our joy and faith.

Inconsistent/prone to ups and downs- Elijah was a human. He experienced highs and lows in his Sometimes he had an emotional high and then depression would follow.

Jas 5:17 **Elijah was a man with a nature like ours**, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain. And it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.

Jas 5:18 He prayed again, and the sky gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

IN our weakness God shows himself strong on our behalf

Ps. 28:7-8, Ps. 37:39-40, Ps. 46:2-4, Isa. 40:29-31

Psa 28:7 Adonai is my strength and my shield. My heart trusts in Him, and I was helped. Therefore my heart leaps for joy, and I will praise Him with my song.

¹¹ All Scriptures are from the Tree of Life Version of the Bible

Psa 28:8 Adonai is their strength—a stronghold of salvation for His anointed.

Psa 37:39 Yet the salvation of the righteous is from Adonai. He is their stronghold in time of trouble.

Psa 37:40 Adonai helps them and delivers them. He rescues them from the wicked and saves them—because they take refuge in Him.

Psa 46:2 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Psa 46:3 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth change, though the mountains topple into the heart of the seas,

Psa 46:4 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at their swelling. Selah

Isa 40:29 He gives strength to the weary, and to one without vigor He adds might.

Isa 40:30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall,

Isa 40:31 but they who wait for Adonai will renew their strength. They will soar up with wings as eagles. They will run, and not grow weary. They will walk, and not be faint.

Strengths: Elijah was a dedicated servant of the Lord in a time when it was very dangerous to even believe in or worship the true God. There are many strengths in his life that we can learn from.

Faith (1 Kings 17:1, 21;18)- There were several times in his life when Elijah demonstrated great faith in God. He confronted Ahab at the very beginning of the account, and God used him to bring a drought onto the land. Soon after that he pleaded with God to raise up the dead boy and God listened to him. The New Testament says that if we have faith we can move mountains and Elijah is an example of someone who demonstrated this kind of faith. Another example is his challenge to the prophets of Baal. He put his life on the line, having faith that God would answer his prayer and show Himself to His people.

God expects His Children to Walk by Faith/Trust In Him. Faith is not an option!

Heb 11:1,6; James 2:17-20 Romans 10:17, 2 Chron 20:20

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of realities not seen.

Heb 11:6 Now without faith it is impossible to please God. For the one who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Jas 2:17 So also faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself.

Jas 2:18 But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith without works and I will show you faith by my works.

Jas 2:19 You believe that God is one. You do well. The demons also believe—and shudder!

Jas 2:20 But do you want to know, you empty person, that faith without works is dead?

Rom 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Messiah.

2Ch 20:20 Early in the morning they arose and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. As they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in Adonai your God and you will be confirmed. Trust in His prophets and you will succeed.”

Obedience (1 Kings 17:3,5; 17:9-10, 18:1-2)- On several occasions God gave Elijah very difficult commands. He told him to go to a river and wait there and the ravens would provide for him. Elijah did it. God told him to go and let a poor widow provide for him. Elijah did it. God told him to go confront Ahab, the king who hated him and wanted to kill him. Elijah did it.

God expects His children to be obedient to His Torah/Teachings and Instructions and to our Messiah Yeshua

Deut. 26:16, Josh 1:8, 1 Sam. 15:22, Matt 7:21, Acts 5:29

Deu 26:16 This day Adonai your God is commanding you to do these statutes and ordinances—so you are to take care and do them with all your heart and with all your soul.

Jos 1:8 This book of the Torah should not depart from your mouth—you are to meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. For then you will make your ways prosperous and then you will be successful.

Jos 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Chazak! Be strong! Do not be terrified or dismayed, for Adonai your God is with you wherever you go.”

1Sa 15:22 Samuel said: “Does Adonai delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of Adonai? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to pay heed than the fat of rams.

Mat 7:21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Mat 7:22 Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in Your name, and drive out demons in Your name, and perform many miracles in Your name?’

Mat 7:23 Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Get away from Me, you workers of lawlessness!’”

Act 5:29 Peter and the emissaries replied, “We must obey God rather than men.

Courage- On numerous occasions Elijah showed great courage by risking his life in order to make a stand for God in front of the people or in front of Ahab, hoping to encourage them to choose to serve God rather than Baal.

God commands us NOT to fear man and to be courageous in serving Him!

Joshua 1:6-7, Deut. 31:6

Jos 1:6 Chazak! Be strong! For you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their fathers to give them.

Jos 1:7 Only be very strong, and resolute to observe diligently the Torah which Moses, My servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so you may be successful wherever you go.

Deu 31:6 Chazak! Be courageous! Do not be afraid or tremble before them. For Adonai your God—He is the One who goes with you. He will not fail you or abandon you.”

Selfless- What was Elijah's motivation for the major events in his life (see 1 Kings 18:37)

We are to Put God First and others before ourselves.

Math 16:24, Luke 14:26-27, Romans 8:13, Romans 15:1; Gal. 5:24

Mat 16:24 Then Yeshua said to His disciples, "If anyone wants to follow after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.

Mat 16:25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Luk 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters—and yes, even his own life—he cannot be My disciple.

Luk 14:27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow Me cannot be My disciple.

Rom 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Ruach you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.

Rom 8:14 For all who are led by the Ruach Elohim, these are sons of God.

Rom 15:1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the powerless and not just please ourselves.

Rom 15:2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, for building him up.

Gal 5:24 Now those who belong to Messiah have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Gal 5:25 If we live by the Ruach, let us also walk by the Ruach.

Gal 5:26 Let us not become conceited—provoking one another, envying one another.

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The image contains two logos. The left logo is for BMTM (Beit Midrash Tefillah Hallel), featuring a purple and gold design with the text 'Yeshua HaMashiach Our Messiah', 'BMTM', and 'Messianic Evangelistic Teaching Center'. The right logo is for DMM (Deborah's Messianic Ministries), featuring a purple and gold design with the text 'Teaching Proclaiming', 'Deborah's Messianic Ministries', 'D.M.M.', and 'Restoration In Messiah Yeshua'. Below the DMM logo is the text 'BMTM is a Ministry Outreach of D.M.M.'.

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