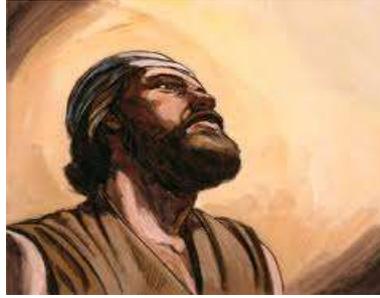


STUDY TWO



Elijah

FIRE AND WATER

Baal was believed to be both a god of Nature (rain) but also a god of the Storm (lightning).

Water

- Drought (17v1)
- The Brook at the Kerith Ravine (17v2-7)
- The Water poured over the sacrifice and into the trench at Mount Carmel (18v32-35)
- The Drought breaks and the Rain falls (18v1,45)
- The Jar of Water provided for Elijah (19v6,8)
- The River Jordan (2 Kngs 2v6-8)

Fire (cf Ps.50v3; 97v1-6)

- The Contest at Mount Carmel (18v20-39)
The god who answers by fire – he is God. (18v24)
Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, 'The Lord – he is God! The Lord – he is God!' (18v38-39)
- The Fire at Mount Horeb (Sinai) (19v12).

Fire speaks of the all-consuming passion, presence and holiness of God. In Deuteronomy 4, the people's obedience and God revealing Himself and speaking through the fire are constantly linked, culminating in v.24: *For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.*

This same thought is picked up by the writer to the Hebrews: *Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming fire.'* (Heb.12v28-29).

Water speaks of hope, of blessing and of new life, a metaphor that Isaiah was inspired to use when he prophesied of the blessing that the returning exiles from Babylon would experience (Isa.12v1-3; 35v7; 41v17-18) and: *For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.* (Isa.44v3).

In New Testament terms, we are drawn to:

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. (Jn.7v37-39).

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Rom.6v11).

WATER >> Boundaries >> Life and Death >> Baptism

RISING AND FALLING

Literal

- The son of the widow at Zarephath dies and is raised to life (17v17-24)
- The fallen altar on Mount Carmel is rebuilt (18v30). (12 stones; 4x3 jars of water; 18v36)
- Fire falls from Heaven (18v38)
- The people fall on their faces before the Lord (18v39)
- Elijah falls to his knees in prayer (18v42)
- Rain falls, as the drought is broken (18v1,45)

Metaphorical

- The People fall from God and are raised up (on an actual Mountain).
We get an indication of their 'limping' between two opinions (18v21), in the conflicted words of Obadiah: Elijah is his 'lord' and he his 'servant' (18v7,9,12-13); God is his 'lord' (18v12); Ahab is his 'lord' (18v10-11,14)
- Baal and the Prophets of Baal fall (18v39-40)
- Elijah falls and is raised up (at Horeb, *the mountain of God* Ex.3v1) (19v1-19)

And at the very end of his ministry and life a cloak will fall and be picked up... (2 Kngs 2v13).

OBEDIENCE, PRAYER AND THE WORD OF POWER

Obedience

Elijah appears out of nowhere and disappears just as suddenly and dramatically but the whole of his life and ministry is marked by this one word – Obedience. Time and time again, God speaks and immediately he obeys (17v1 – where he can only be speaking the word that God has given him to speak; 17v2-5; 17v8-10; 18v1-2; 19v7-8; 19v11; 19v15-19; 21v17-20; 2 Kngs 1v3-4).

At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: 'Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. (18v36)

Prayer (Jas.5v17-18)

(17v17-24; 18v36-37; 18v41-45)

The Word of Power

Because Jesus lived in total obedience to His Father's will and because His life was one of prayer, His actions were His Father's actions and His words were His Father's words.

(17v1; 17v14; 17v21; 18v36-37; 18v41; 21v21-24).

IN CONCLUSION

- Looking at the reverse of a complex tapestry, it is hard to see any shape or pattern. But look at the front and the picture becomes clear. We can see patterns in the life and ministry of Elijah. Are there not the same purposeful and divine patterns that God has weaved and is weaving into our lives?
- A Divine Equation: Obedience + Prayer = Power.