

There are 1,000 ways to study FAITH. You can go heavy on the definitions, proving the word is akin to BELIEF and CONFIDENCE in GOD. You can go heavy on imagery, like the SHIELD of FAITH, our acknowledgement of God's power leading our defense. You can definitely go heavy on WORKS, not as faith, but as that which grows out of true faith and proves the existence of GREAT FAITH. **James 2.**

All of this is good. It is needful and useful. But sometimes, you just need a good old fashioned, EXAMPLE OF FAITH. Maybe it is Jesus. His confidence in God and faithful obedience in trust. Maybe it is Abraham, who trusted God, having hope against hope, and used that to even offer his own son.

Hebrews 11 does exactly this, and would give us a wealth of options. The chapter opens by telling us what faith is: Assurance and Conviction in God, then goes on to show you what FAITH DOES, how it lives and moves through no less than 11 examples, with a list of 6 more tacked on.

So, for a few minutes this morning, let's just look at a man's life. Let's learn of his faith in God, and visualize what that looked like in his life. He is not one from Hebrews, but you know his name well.

He's an amazing figure in God's history with man. (**Matt. 17:1-2**) at the Transfiguration of Jesus. But, as **James 5:17** records, though he did great things by faith, he was just a human like us.

The Faith of Elijah! – If I asked you to describe events from his life that demonstrated his faith, could you think of a few? I'll say this, he is often confused with his successor as prophet to Israel – Elisha.

Remember when Naaman the leper was brought to him and washed and was healed? Elisha.

Remember that time the iron ax head fell in the Jordan and then floated? Elisha.

Remember when the servant's eyes saw the angels in flaming chariots about them? Yep, Elisha.

But that doesn't mean Elijah didn't show amazing faith in his life as well. Let's look at 8 chapters that layout the events of Elijah, highlighting 5 particular events along the way.

1. The Judgment of Drought (*I Kings 17*)

- a. (**16:33**) – Ahab, and his wife Jezebel, were awful, godless people.
- b. (**17:1**) – So Elijah announces that rain will be withheld from Israel.
- c. God proceeds to protect and care for Elijah during these three years.
 - i. (**17:2-6**) – God sent him to a safe place and fed and nourished him.
 - ii. (**17:8-9, 14-16**) – God sets up a widow and a miracle to provide.
(**17:17,21-24**) – He raised the widow's son.
- d. (**18:1-2**) – God command him to reappear to Ahab.
- e. (**18:17-18**) – Ahab blames Elijah for the drought, but it was the king's sin.

2. The Challenge on Mount Carmel (*I Kings 18*)

- a. (**18:19-21**) – He asks Ahab to gather all the prophets of Baal – Which god is True?
- b. (**18:22-24**) – The challenge is explained.
- c. (**18:25-29**) – The prophets of Baal wait and chant, but fail. (**Read 28-29**)
- d. (**18:31-39**) – Elijah victors by the power of God! – God is the only god! (**Read 37-38**)
- e. (**18:40,41,42,45**) – False prophets die. Elijah prays for rain to return.

3. The Flight for His Life (*I Kings 19*)

- a. (**19:1-3**) – Jezebel is furious about the prophets and seeks to kill Elijah.
- b. (**19:5-8**) – God continues to care for him; this time by an angel.
- c. (**19:9-10**) – Elijah hits his low point. He is discouraged and worn out by the whole thing.
- d. (**19:15-17**) – God doesn't throw a pity party. He gives him new goals, duties, work to do.
- e. (**19:18**) – God tells Elijah that a remnant of faithful remain. Hope and faith still exist!

4. His Message to the Royals (*I Kings 21; II Kings 1*)

- a. In I Kings 21, Jezebel kills Naboth to take his vineyard for Ahab.
- b. (21:17-21, 23-24) – Judgment is announced against Ahab and Jezebel.
- c. (22:51-53) – Ahaziah, Ahab's son, is just as evil as his father was.
- d. (II Ki. 1:1-4) – Ahaziah falls, and Elijah comes and announced his eminent death!
- e. You might remember, three companies of soldiers are sent to get him. The first 50 are consumed by fire. The second 50 are also consumed. The third group begs for mercy.
- f. (II Ki. 1:15-16) – He finally goes and announces in person the demise of Ahaziah.

5. He is Taken Up into Heaven (*II Kings 2*)

- a. (II Ki. 2:1-4) – Elisha follows Elijah to Jericho. Changing of the guard eminent.
- b. (II Ki. 2:7-8) – They both cross the Jordan on dry ground.
- c. (II Ki. 2:11-12) – His life here on earth ends in an amazing and unique manner.

Application: Well, what about Elijah's journey, his faith, his choices, can be of help to us? On a specific level, maybe not much. We will never be in situations exactly like his. But upon broader observation, there are some Truths about Faith at play in this story that are as true now as they have ever been!

1. God Takes Care of His People

- a. Elijah was fed, given water, and sent to someone who could care for him.
- b. **Matthew 6:25,30-31,33** – Faith is Trust. It is conviction that God will care for us.
- c. Mark 10:29-30 – People in our lives to help us serve God. As we also help them.
- d. **Phil. 4:12-13** – Even when times were tough, God never deserts or abandons His own.

2. Prayers in Faith Change Lives

- a. Elijah appealed to God and it didn't rain for 3 years (imprecatory prayer). Then he prayed for the rain to fall again and it did (renewed blessings). *When prayers align with God's providential plan, things happen, amazing things happen.*
- b. **James 1:5-10** – Prayers of doubt do no good. Those are not of a faithful spirit.
- c. **James 5:13-16** – Whatever you are facing, pain in body, challenges in life, sin – pray and get elders to pray. When prayers align with God's will, great things are guaranteed!
- d. **James 5:16-18** – If God can control the skies, He can forgive your sins. PRAY!

3. Discouragement is Beatable

- a. Elijah was so low and lonely at one point. God commanded him through it.
- b. First, he was told to get up and go and carry out Good Works.
- c. Second, he was told that he was not alone, there are others to help and save!
- d. **Rom. 12:21, 6-9, 10-13** – Don't be overcome. Do good. Get active. Help people!
- e. Top 10 ways to overcome discouragement – Get up and go out and do for others!!!

4. Sin is Opposed, No Matter Where

- a. Elijah opposed Ahab, Jezebel, Ahaziah – powerhouse, super dangerous people! God sent him right into their courts, when it could have meant death. But sin had to be opposed!
- b. There are no safe zones for sin, where its just too dangerous for us to expose it. Family, friends, in the church, in oneself. No. No matter the cost, sin hurts God.
- c. **Ephesians 5:11-14** – A message of hope is nice. But first comes the SPOTLIGHT on SIN!
- d. If Elijah can march into those courts, I can go to people in my life with the Truth.

6. Faithfulness is All About Heaven

- a. Elisha wouldn't leave Elijah's side, because he knew. He knew he was going to heaven. He wanted to see it. And it was an amazing sight. You know what Elisha lived for.
- b. **Revelation 2:10** – Every challenge and struggle, worth the while if we get to heaven.
- c. **I Thess. 4:16-18** – One day He will come to us. Never lose sight of this end. It is God's limitless reward for people who live the faith of Elijah and follow the will of God.

Conclusion – How do you know if you live by faith? Well, it is about belief. Do you believe these five things, from your very core? What would you be willing to do with that belief today?