

## **ELIJAH A GREAT PROPHET**

– *AUGUST 29. – 1 KINGS 17:1-16. –*

A FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE TRUE GOD – ELIJAH  
A TYPE OF THE CHURCH – THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH –  
THE ANTITYPICAL JEZEBEL AND AHAB – THE  
ANTITYPICAL 1260 DAYS OF SPIRITUAL FAMINE –  
REFORMATION BY SECTS – THE LATEST REFORM  
MOVEMENT.

**"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."  
– 1 Peter 5:7.**

ELIJAH was a great Prophet. This fact is evidenced not only by the account of the Old Testament, from which our lesson is taken, but also by the words of Jesus respecting him, and the words of the Apostle James. (James 5:16-18.) He comes to our attention as the Lord's mouthpiece to King Ahab, of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. He brought the king a threat of famine, assuring him that there would be no rain nor dew upon the land of Israel until Elijah would pray God for it. This meant drouth, famine, trouble. Elijah was not making this declaration on any authority of his own, but because it was the Divine Program and he had been so directed of the Lord. True prophets of God are not boastful, and never take honors or powers themselves. They speak merely as Divine mouthpieces.

The reason for such a trouble, chastisement, coming upon King Ahab and the nation of Israel was that it was intended to be corrective, and additionally, as we shall see, it was prophetic or typical. The Israelites had gone into idolatry, and King Ahab had cooperated and had been a leader. The prophets of God had been persecuted, and the prophets of Baal had been honored. A great

national chastisement might do them good. Accordingly, as stated in the first verse of our lesson, the issue was plainly declared to the king by Elijah, who then was directed to go to the brook Cherith.

This brook is in the mountainside, on the roadway leading from Jerusalem down to the Dead Sea, near the [R5741 : page 236] place where the Jordan enters it. It was a lonely spot, and is now marked by an ancient convent. There, for three and a half years, the Prophet made his home, away from the public, and was fed by ravens, which brought him bread and flesh morning and evening. The water of the brook slaked his thirst. As the drouth continued, the brook finally dried up; and the Prophet was directed to the home of a widow of the town of Zarephath – beyond Israel's border, in the land of Zidon.

Jesus referred to this incident, remarking that the woman was a Gentile, and that the sending of Elijah to her implied that she was more worthy of the blessings he accorded than were any of the widows of the land of Israel. (Luke 4:25,26.) The poor widow had but a remnant of meal whereby to make a few cakes to sustain herself and her son; but at the Prophet's suggestion she had faith enough to share her little remnant with him. The result was a miracle. The remnant continued, as the Prophet had declared, throughout the famine. "The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord which He spake by Elijah."

### **ELIJAH'S ANTITYPICAL PROPHECY**

As already suggested, Elijah's prophecy was larger than on the surface appeared; for he and all of his doings were a type on a small scale of greater things which came afterwards. Elijah was a type of the Church in the flesh – the Church of which Jesus is the Head, and all of His saintly followers are the members. It was of this antitypical Elijah that God declared, "Behold, I will send

you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the children to the fathers, and the heart of the fathers to the children; otherwise I will come and smite the earth with a curse." – Malachi 4:5,6.

Jesus and His Apostles, and all of His followers, as the members of this greater Elijah, actuated by the Spirit of God, have been delivering a Message to the world. They have been reproofing sin, and making known to the world the righteousness of God. If the world had heeded the Message, the Kingdom of Messiah on the spirit plane would eventually have been ushered in, as the desire of all nations, without any great Time of Trouble, or "Day of Wrath," being necessary. But the world has not heeded the Message of Jesus and His followers; and hence the smiting of the earth with a curse, the blow of the great Time of Trouble now beginning, is the only way by which Messiah's Kingdom can be ushered in.

The nations, having accepted a form of godliness merely, and without the power and spirit of it, are Christian nations merely in name, not in fact, as the present great war for commercial supremacy of the world abundantly demonstrates. By this war and by the great revolution which the Bible declares will follow it, and by the world-wide anarchy which will result from the revolution, all the kingdoms of the world will be overthrown and all the present systems and institutions will be ground to powder, that the way for Messiah's Kingdom, and its place, may be prepared. What did not come through obedience to the Truth will come through the overthrow of those who heard but neglected, perverted and distorted the Divine Message of "Peace on earth, good will to men."

## **FULFILMENT OF THAT PROPHECY**

That God meant Elijah to be a type of the Church is confirmed to us by certain statements in the Revelation. The matter is there covertly presented, a great religious system being figuratively described as Jezebel, and the worldly system to which this professed Church of Christ is united being represented by Ahab, the king of Israel. In this figure, as Elijah fled from Jezebel and Ahab's power for three and one-half years, so the Church is said to flee into the wilderness to a place prepared for her, where she is miraculously sustained of the Lord for three and a half "Times," or symbolic years, otherwise explained as 42 months, or 1260 days. – Revelation 2:20-23; 12:6,14; 13:5; 11:2,3.

That long period of time when the true Church was eclipsed by the success of Babylon marked the time of great spiritual drouth. As during the time of Elijah's absence at the brook Cherith and in Zidon there was no rain, so with the world, during those 1260 years there was no spiritual rain, no refreshment from on High. During that long period the Word of God, the Bible, was suppressed and neglected. The Bishops, Catholic and Protestant, suppressed it because if the people paid attention to the teachings of Jesus and the Twelve Apostles whom He appointed (St. Paul taking the place of Judas), they would proportionately ignore the teachings of the bishops who falsely proclaimed themselves "apostolic" bishops, and arrogated to themselves the power and authority which Jesus declared belonged only to The Twelve. These Twelve our Lord declared to be the twelve stars **[R5742 : page 236]** to guide the Church (Revelation 12:1), and the twelve foundation stones of the glorious New Jerusalem, which is about to be established. – Revelation 21:14.

It was during that dark time that there was a famine in the land, as mentioned by the Prophet – not a famine for bread nor a

thirst for water, but a famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord. (Amos 8:11,12.) According to the Bible those 1260 years of drouth began with the year 539 A.D., when ecclesiastical power attained persecuting ability, and ended in 1799 A.D., as its persecutions came to an end, at the time of Napoleon's great victory, when the pope was taken prisoner to France.

In another sense, however, the 1260 years would very properly extend from the year 325 A.D. to the year 1585 A.D. It was in the year 325 A.D. that the self-styled apostolic bishops convened under the patronage of Emperor Constantine, constituted themselves the Ecumenical Council of Nice, and formulated the first of the great creeds, the Nicene Creed. From that time onward for 1260 years the Bible was neglected; for the creeds made by these so-called apostolic bishops were accepted as instead of the Bible, as brief and comprehensive statements of its teachings, which alone were to be believed. Any one thereafter studying the Bible was esteemed to be finding fault with the creeds, and was correspondingly condemned. The creeds were studied, and the Bible thereafter was neglected.

It was during that long period of 1260 years that the egregious errors which have since troubled mankind became interwoven with the creeds of the Dark Ages. And it is since those 1260 years ended that the reform movement has prevailed – not a satisfactory reformation, according to the Bible, but a reformation by sects. Misguided by the thought that the Church should be one of outward organization, each reformer gathered his followers to him and started a new sect, which claimed to be the true Church. Undoubtedly the Adversary had much to do with the organization of these various denominations, which nowhere have authority in the Bible. (1 Corinthians 1:11-13; 3:3-5.) In recent times Christian people are realizing that none of these is the true Church of Christ, which is composed only of saints; and

they gather to the Lord, irrespective of denominational lines of any kind.

