

28 – After the Fire a Still Small Voice

Introduction

Context	In our last lesson, we reviewed the fall of Solomon and his greedy and wicked son, Rheoboam, who caused the kingdom to divide into Israel (10 tribes) and Judah. Rheoboam ruled over Judah and Jeroboam ruled over Israel. Both led their kingdoms into gross wickedness.
1 Kings 16:29-33	What is happening in Israel (10 tribes)? (Ahab, the king, is taking it further downhill).
?	Why doesn't God tolerate perpetual wickedness among a people that were formerly under covenant with Him?
?	What does He do about it eventually?
!	We now meet Elijah who enters the scene with some remarkable stories recorded in the scriptural record.

Elijah and the Priesthood Keys

1 Kings 17:1-6	The record does not give us any background on Elijah. We don't even know where a "Tishbite" comes from. It is about 900 BC. Why does the Lord cause a drought and famine in Israel?
Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, Elijah the Prophet and His Mission	There is something very significant in that edict. I want you to get it. Follow me again closely: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, <i>but according to my word</i> . The reason I put emphasis upon this is to impress you with the <u>sealing power</u> by which Elijah was able to close the heavens that there should be no rain nor dew until he spoke.
?	What do we know about Elijah from Latter-Day revelation?
Malachi 4:5-6	Elijah has a significant role in ushering in the Second Coming
!	We know that the Jews, in their celebration of the Passover feast, have an empty chair at their table symbolic of the waiting for the return of Elijah the prophet. They open a door to their home when they lift the "third cup" to drink.
3 Ne 23:6-7	Nephi is commanded to bring their scriptures to Jesus so additional scripture can be added that they did not have

3 Ne 24:1	Commanded to write the words of Malachi (3 & 4)
3 Ne 25:5-6	These verses from Malachi again
DC 2	First recorded revelation of the restoration (Malachi)
?	<p>Why is this passage so important to us?</p> <p>A primary purpose of the restoration is to restore the sealing power and authority so that eternal families can be created and sealed. The fullness of the Priesthood is required.</p> <p>Elijah had this power. Elijah held the keys.</p>
Matt 17:1-3	Mount of transfiguration.
Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, Elijah the Prophet and His Mission	<p>Why was Elijah reserved? What keys did he hold? What keys did he bestow on Peter, James and John? Exactly the same keys that he bestowed upon the head of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. And what were they? Some of you may be saying the keys of baptism for the dead. No, it was not that. Some of you may be thinking it was the keys of the salvation of the dead. No, it was not that. That was only a portion of it. The keys that Elijah held were the keys of the everlasting priesthood, the keys of the sealing power, which the Lord gave unto him. And that is what he came and bestowed upon the head of Peter, James and John, and that is what he gave to the Prophet Joseph Smith; and that included a ministry of sealing for the living as well as the dead—and it is not confined to the living and it is not confined to the dead, but includes them both.</p>
Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol 4:207	<p><i>"Elijah was the last prophet that held the keys of the priesthood, and who will, before the last dispensation, restore the authority and deliver the keys of the priesthood, in order that all the ordinances may be attended to in righteousness. It is true that the Savior had authority and power to bestow this blessing; but the sons of Levi were too prejudiced. 'And I will send Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord,' etc. Why send Elijah? Because he holds the keys of the authority to administer in all the ordinances of the priesthood; and without the authority is given, the ordinances could not be administered in righteousness."</i></p> <p><i>"The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that he have power to hold the keys of the revelation, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth."</i></p>
Matt 16:18-19	Keys to seal given to Peter.

Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, Elijah the Prophet and His Mission	<i>It makes no difference how great an office you have, what position in the Church you hold, you cannot officiate unless the keys, the sealing power, is there back of it. That is the thing that counts; and that is why Elijah came, that is why Moses came—for he also held keys of the priesthood—and that is why they conferred upon the head of Peter, James and John in that dispensation these privileges or these powers, these keys, that they might go forth and perform this labor; and that is why they came to the Prophet Joseph Smith.</i>
Matt 18:18	Keys given to all of the Twelve. Chapter 17 is the Mount of Transfiguration which precedes this.
DC 110:13-16	Keys given to Joseph and Oliver. The Twelve will later receive them.
?	In the Lord’s plan of salvation, why is it so important for families to be sealed together?
DC 131:1-4	Discuss Exaltation cannot be achieved unless a man and a woman enter into this order of the priesthood. It is entered into through the ordinance and covenant of the temple sealing. Without this ordinance, exaltation is not possible. Those who administer it are called “Sealers”.
?	What of those who do not have the opportunity during mortality to receive this ordinance and enter into this order of the priesthood? (they will later receive it) Testify: ALL who want it will receive it. No exceptions.

Elijah and the widow of Zeraphath

1 Kings 17:7-9	Elijah commanded to go to Zeraphath where a widow will sustain him during the famine and drought.
?	Could not the Lord have caused the brook to give water? And the ravens to continue feeding him? Why didn’t He do that?
?	Why didn’t the Lord let Elijah live in his nice home and provide for him the comforts he probably had before the drought? Doesn’t the Lord take care of his righteous servants? What lesson do we learn from this? (even the righteous will go through rough times but He will provide for them).
?	What if Elijah had not obeyed the word of the Lord? (The Lord would not have provided for him)

?	Did Elijah know what would happen in Zeraphath? Did the widow know what would happen?
Video	Old Testament DVD (10 minutes)
?	How did the widow woman show her faith? She was willing to give of her last food to a stranger.
?	Why did she give food to the stranger at the risk of both her faster death by starvation and her son's?
?	Did the Lord know what the outcome would be?
?	Why did He make her take the first step of faith before the cruise and the barrel were refilled?
?	How does the Lord teach us in the same way he taught the widow and the prophet?
J. R. Holland GC, Apr 96	"I know we can each do something, however small that act may seem to be. We can pay an honest tithe and give our fast and freewill offerings. . . . And we can watch for other ways to help. To worthy causes and needy people, we can give time if we don't have money, and we can give love when our time runs out. We can share the loaves we have and trust God that the cruse of oil will not fail"
?	What promises do we already have from God that are like the promise of Elijah that the cruse of oil shall not fail nor shall the barrel waste? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tithing - Word of wisdom - Protection of our temple garment - Keep the commands... prosper in the land
DC 82:10	Lord is bound when we do what He says
!	Be like the widow... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When the Lord asks you to fetch water, do not hesitate - When the Lord asks you to serve another, do not pause - Build your faith to be strong enough, like the widow, to take the first step into the darkness, not knowing what will happen, so that He may cause miracles to happen in your life.

Pres. Ezra Taft Benson GC, April 1988	“When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities. . . . “May God bless us to put [him] first and, as a result, reap peace in this life and eternal life with a fullness of joy in the life to come”
--	---

Elijah Challenges the Priests of Baal (if time available)

1 Kings 18:1	Elijah is commanded to speak to Ahab the king.
?	In the two years of drought, Ahab had his armies searching for Elijah to kill him. The Lord’s commandment would put Elijah into a very dangerous situation. His life would be in peril.
1 Kings 18:17-19	Elijah meets Ahab. Asks him to gather 450 priests of Baal and 400 priests of the groves at Mt. Carmel, a place of worship of Baal.
21	Elijah is going to put Baal to the test in front of the people. Do you think Elijah is doing this on his own? Or did the Lord instruct him to do this?
22-29	The priests of Baal come up short
31-40	The Lord consumes the sacrifice
!	The final verses of Chapter 18 talk of the rain pouring down upon Israel.
?	What lessons do we learn from this remarkable story? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Lord’s love extends even to those who reject Him – His arm is always stretched out - Repentance is always available - He cannot bless us in full until we keep His commandments

Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, Elijah the Prophet and His Mission

This passage that I read in the beginning says this: "He shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers." The Prophet says that that is not the correct translation—**the word plant should be translated seal or bind.** Now you get a glimpse of what is meant in that concluding paragraph, where it says that the whole earth would be smitten with a curse if Elijah did not first come. Why would it be smitten? Because there could be no sealing up against the day of destruction, no sealing of parents to each other, no sealing of children to parents, no contracts, bonds, obligations entered into that would be valid on

the other side—because the clinching power was not there, and it was necessary that Elijah should come and bestow those things spoken of as *all* things in the scriptures.

Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, Elijah the Prophet and His Mission

Now, just one more thought. **You good sisters**, who are single and alone, do not fear, do not feel that blessings are going to be withheld from you. You are not under any obligation or necessity of accepting some proposal that comes to you which is distasteful for fear you will come under condemnation. If in your hearts you feel that the gospel is true, and would under proper conditions receive these ordinances and sealing blessings in the temple of the Lord, and that is your faith and your hope and your desire, and that does not come to you now, the Lord will make it up, and you shall be blessed—for no blessing shall be withheld.

The Lord will judge you according to the desires of your hearts when blessings are withheld, and he is not going to condemn you for that which you cannot help.