



Daring Audacity

Key Point

Elijah begins his work. He has courage to call out the character of Ahab. Elijah steps up with audacity to do what God commands.

Scripture

1 Kings 16:28–17:1

²⁸ Omri rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. And Ahab his son succeeded him as king.

²⁹ In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years. ³⁰ Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. ³¹ He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. ³² He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. ³³ Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him.

³⁴ In Ahab's time, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. He laid its foundations at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram, and he set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken by Joshua son of Nun.

^{17:1} Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."

Reflection

- What is it like to stand for God in today's world?
- How does the evil in the world affect your personal witness?

Our world is changing out from under us. Some days it may feel like our culture is sliding away from the values and beliefs that made us a great people. What would it look like to return to the roots of our faith in our modern context? Is it even possible?

Context

Elijah faced a world like ours. It's easy to think that a prophet like Elijah was a man completely different than we are. "He's a super-saint." "His service is far beyond anything I can do." But James 5:17–18 says explicitly, "Elijah was a man just like us." In a time of horrible idolatry and false religion, Elijah appears. There is no discussion of his background or early life. The only indication we have of his family background was that his parents gave him the name *Elijah: Yaweh is my God*. At the time of increasing worship of the god, Baal, Elijah, by his name stands against false worship.

Our passage begins not with a discussion of Elijah—we know almost nothing about him—but about the incredible evil of Ahab. In spite of the culture that was conforming to the ways of King Ahab, Elijah had the faith to stand up for what he knew to be right in God's eyes. He recognized the evil that was being introduced into the land. He wasn't swayed by the culture around him. His identity was that of a man who serves God, and is obedient to him.

Making it Personal

- As servants of God, what posture should we take toward the prevailing culture?
- How is our behavior different from those who do not serve God?
- How aware are we of the ways that culture influences our behavior and relationship with God?

Application

We can get overwhelmed by the evils in our world. Think of one problem of evil that you might take a stand against. As God's servant, what could you do to work against this evil? Ask God to lead you to an issue that is a result of the evil in our world. Read or listen to the media with the intention of hearing God speak to you about this evil. Respond in prayer.

Going Deeper

Is God asking you to do more?

Pray for all of our leaders that they would not be influenced by evil. Pray for their spiritual development and that they would look to God for wisdom and guidance.

God must have given Elijah a unique personality and confidence in his calling.

- What are your personal strengths that God could work through for you to be his servant and stand up for good?
- What stands in the way of you being faithful to what God is calling you to do?