

## JUST LIKE US

**“Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.” (James 5:17-18)**

James wrote: **“Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray” (Ja. 5:13)**. Then to encourage us he reminds us that Elijah “was a man just like us”. Yet, in spite of being so ordinary God still answered his prayers.

Elijah was a Tishbite (1 Ki. 17:1). Many scholars believe that this world means “stranger”. Ordinary people can sometimes accomplish great things if they are “well connected”. As someone said, “who you know” is more important than “what you know”. Elijah however, had no friends in high places. He apparently didn’t know anyone in Israel because he was a “stranger”.

Yet he still prayed and God answered his prayers!

This “stranger” boldly approached King Ahab and said: **“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.” (1 Kings 17:1)**

Remember that Elijah was a man “just like us”. He was a “nobody”. He had no friends in high places and no track record of success. His resume was just as empty as ours. Yet God empowered this very ordinary man to stop and start rainfall over an entire nation.

God has a track record of promoting ordinary people to positions of power. His selection of the 12 apostles, for example, illustrates this truth in a remarkable way. These men who were chosen by God to be the foundation of His eternal Kingdom were also very ordinary. Not one of the original 12 was rich, powerful, well educated, or well connected. God has consistently chosen men considered weak and foolish to confound those whom the world considers wise and powerful (1 Cor. 1:26 - 31).

Yes! Elijah was a man just like us. He was very ordinary. He had his good days and he also had his bad days. Take a long look at Elijah sitting down under a broom tree and praying to die (1 Ki. 19: 4). He got tired and discouraged just like we do. He was just like us! Yet he prayed and God answered his prayer! James reminds us of Elijah so that any time we are in trouble we can pray like he did.

One reason why this great prophet was depressed and suicidal was because he was tired and hungry. At this point Elijah did not need a sermon, he needed food and rest. God sent an angel to meet those at needs and Elijah was once again strengthened for service. Since he was “just like us” there are times when we too need food and rest more than we need a sermon.;

Sometimes there is an advantage to being ordinary. Jeremiah wrote: **“Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight, declares the Lord” (Jer 9:23-24)**. Elijah obviously knew God. Do you?

Paul was different from the original 12 apostles. While they had nothing to boast about, he did!. His earthly achievements, however, were a hindrance. They were actually a stumbling block preventing him access to the power of God. That’s why he willingly cast aside his earthly credentials like rubbish (Phil. 3:4 - 16). Paul actually discovered that the power of God was made perfect in his weakness (2 Cor. 12:9).

Are you in trouble? That’s nothing new for the child of God. Jesus clearly warned us that “In this world you will have trouble” (Jn. 16:33). That’s why we need to remember Elijah!