

Eliyahu ~ Part 20

In my last post, we explored other references to **Eliyahu** in the **Tanakh** and **Brit Hadasah**. In this post, we will continue our study of **Eliyahu** by examining passages in the **Brit Hadashah** that refer to him. There are multiple references to **Eliyahu** in the Gospels and rather than try to put them in chronological order; I have decided to start with **Mattityahu** (Mathew) and go thru to **Yochanan** (John) before moving on to the epistles.

Our first reference in **Mattityahu** is in answer to **Yeshua's** question to his talmidim on who people were saying He is. **"They said, 'Well, some say Yochanan the Immerser, others Eliyahu, still others Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) or one of the prophets.'"** ~ Matthew 16:14 (CJB) (see also Mark 8:28 and Luke 9:19). It had been prophesied that **Eliyahu** would come again, and some thought that this prediction was fulfilled in **Yeshua**. However, **Yeshua** did not minister as did **Eliyahu**. **Yochanan the Immerser** had previously been associated with **Eliyahu** and baptized **Yeshua**. He had already been beheaded by **Herod**, so it's hard for me to understand how **Yeshua** could have been mistaken for him. **Yirmeyahu** was the weeping prophet whose tender heart was broken at the sight of the decay of the nation. Certainly, this attitude was seen in **Yeshua**, the Man of sorrows. As Warren Wiersbe says: **"One thing is clear: We can never make a true decision about Jesus Christ by taking a poll of the people."** ¹

As an aside, there are several passages relating **Eliyahu** to **Yochanan the Immerser** in the **Brit Hadashah**. Perhaps the two most telling are **Yochanan's** denial and **Yeshua's** clarification of the relationship. The Priests and Levites from **Yerushalayim** asked him, **"Who are you? he was very straightforward and stated clearly, 'I am not the Messiah.' 'Then who are you?' they asked him. 'Are you Eliyahu? 'No, I am not,' he said."** (emphasis added.) ~ John 1:19b-21a (CJB) In referring to **Yochanan the Immerser**, **Yeshua** stated: **"I tell you that Eliyahu has come, and they did whatever they pleased to him, just as the Tanakh says about him."** ~ Mark 9:13 (CJB) Clearly, **Yochanan** had ministered in the spirit and power of **Eliyahu**.

We now come to one of my favorite passages, **Yeshua** on the **Mount of Transfiguration**. **"Yeshua took Kefa, Ya'akov and his brother Yochanan and led them up a high mountain privately."** ² **As they watched, he began to change form — his face shone like the sun, and his clothing became as white as light."** ³ **Then they looked and saw Moshe and Eliyahu speaking with him."** ⁴ **Kefa said to Yeshua, "It's good that we're here, Lord. I'll put up three shelters if you want — one for you, one for Moshe and one for Eliyahu."** ⁵ **While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them; and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him!"** ⁶ **When the talmidim heard this, they were so frightened that they fell face down on the ground."** ⁷ **But Yeshua came and touched them. "Get up!" he said, "Don't be afraid."** ⁸ **So they opened their eyes, looked up and saw only Yeshua by himself."** ~ Matthew 17:1-8 (CJB) Similar passages also appear in Mark 9:2ff and Luke 9:28ff.

The presence of **Moshe** and **Eliyahu** was significant **Moshe** represented the Law and **Eliyahu** the prophets. All of the Law and Prophets point to **Yeshua** and are fulfilled in the **Messiah** (Luke 24:27; Hebrews 1:1). Not one word of the **Tanakh** Scriptures will be unfulfilled. But why **Eliyahu**? Why not **Yesha'yahu**, **Yirmeyahu** or one of the other great prophets of old? Perhaps Luke answers that for us in his version of this passage. **They (Moshe and Eliyahu) appeared in glorious splendor and spoke of his exodus, which he was soon to accomplish in Yerushalayim.** Luke 9:31 (CJB) Clearly, both had experience with their own exodus experience.

¹ Bible Exposition Commentary (BE Series) - New Testament by Warren Wiersbe.

Continuing in Mattityahu, the next and last reference to **Eliyahu** is during Yeshua's crucifixion as He quotes from Psalm 22. *"⁴⁶ At about three, Yeshua uttered a loud cry, "Eli! Eli! L'mah sh'vaktani? (My God! My God! Why have you deserted me?)"⁴⁷ On hearing this, some of the bystanders said, "He's calling for Eliyahu."⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, soaked it in vinegar, put it on a stick and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ The rest said, "Wait! Let's see if Eliyahu comes and rescues him."⁵⁰ But Yeshua, again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit."* ~ Matthew 27:46-50 (CJB) Apparently, the crowd wasn't as well versed in the **Tanakh** as we might expect. **Eli** is not a nickname for **Eliyahu** but is in fact "My God." **Yeshua** was reciting the first verse of Psalm 21. In Jewish tradition, the first verse is sufficient for reference to the entire passage. Tradition also held that Psalm 21 was and is a Messianic passage.

Sha'ul makes a brief comment on **Eliyahu** in Romans 11:2 referring back to the material we previously covered in 1 King 19.

Our last direct reference to **Eliyahu** is in James 5:17 which I have previously shared, but I think is worthy of an encore. *"Eliyahu was only a human being like us, yet he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and no rain fell on the Land for three years and six months."* James 5:17 (CJB) I think that it is critical for us to remember that, except for **Yeshua**, all the Biblical characters were just as flawed as many of us, yet they were also obedient to God's will for them.

Finally, as I declared in my blog post on **The Two Witnesses** in **Revelation 11:3-6**, I firmly believe that the two witnesses are **Hanokh** and **Eliyahu**.

In my next post, we will begin to explore the life of **Elisha**.