

# Chapter 62: God Raises up Prophets—Mission of the Prophet Elias

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## Commentary on Chapter 62

**The Prophets.** A prophet is one whom God sent as a messenger to His people. They were men of God who led a life of penance, wore coarse clothing, prayed and fasted. All through the Old Testament, but especially after the time of Moses, the Bible tells us about the prophets. They taught the people how God wished them to live. They warned them that they would be punished for serving false gods. They promised them blessings if they were faithful to the true God. They also told events that were still in the distant future. Some of these future events they foretold were the punishments God would send on the kings and the people if they did not convert. They also foretold many things about the coming Redeemer. The prophets worked many miracles to show that their messages were from God. Frequently, they had to suffer because the wicked rulers of Israel did not like their messages.

Most of the prophets merely spoke the messages which God sent through them. This was the case with Nathan in the time of David, and with Elias in the time of Achab, and also with the many others who are named in the Old Testament Story. There were other prophets who also wrote down their messages. First, they spoke their prophecies to the people. Later, they put these messages in writing.

In the Old Testament there are *sixteen* books written by the prophets. *Four* are called Major Prophets because their books are rather long. *Twelve* are called Minor Prophets because their books are shorter.

The Major Prophets are: Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel and Daniel. The Minor Prophets are: Osee, Amos and Micheas, who lived about the time of Isaias, Nahum, Habacuc and Sophonias, who were active about the time of Jeremias; Aggeus, Zacharias, and Malachias, whom God sent to His people after the exile; Abdias, Joel and Jonas, who served God at other times.

From the writings of the prophets you will learn how good God was to His Chosen People. he dealt with them as a kind father would deal with his son.

**The Power of Prayer.** At Elias's prayer the heavens were shut, so that no rain fell for a long time. By prayer he raised the dead boy to life. At the brook Carith he spent his days in prayer and contemplation. God heard and answered his prayers, firstly, because he prayed with devotion, humility and confidence ; and secondly because he was a holy man, lived in the grace of God, and avoided sin.

**The Raising of the Widow's Son by Elias.** This is a symbol of the spiritual resurrection of souls from mortal sin through Christ. The world lay dead in sin; but Jesus Christ has restored it to the life of sanctifying grace by stretching Himself on the cross.

## Questions to be Answered Using the Bible History Book:

1. (a) In whose reign did Elias live? (b) What was the name of this king's wife?

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What great crimes did this king commit?

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3. What punishment did Elias predict would fall on the Israelites?

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4. What did the king want to do to Elias?

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5. What great miracle did Elias work for the poor woman with only a little ground up grain (meal) and oil?

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### Questions to be Answered Using the Commentary:

6. In one sentence, explain who the prophets were.

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7. (a) Which prophets wrote books that were rather long? (b) Which prophets wrote shorter books?

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Name the four Major Prophets.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_

(4) \_\_\_\_\_

9. (a) What things did Elias do because he prayed? (b) Why were his prayers pleasing to God?

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10. What is the raising of the widow's son a symbol of?

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