

Introduction

- Prophet, Priest, King
 - did **King David**, something of what characterised his life, last week
 - next week **Priest - Aaron?**
 - with an eye to how **Jesus** was the perfect fulfillment and embodiment of each strand of the OT revelation!
 - so this week **Prophet - Elijah!**

Elijah the Prophet Spoke...

- Throughout his life - don't know of his call - only know him as prophet, his whole identity!

Summary

- fed by ravens (**passive, waits to be fed**) **1 Kings 17:1-6**
- widow at Zarephath - **endless flour and oil** (**announces what God will do**), and **bringing son back to life** (**asking, and Lord hearing him**) **1 Kings 17:7-24**
- making contact with Ahab through Obadiah **1 Kings 18:1-15**
- confronting Ahab and the Baal prophets on Carmel **1 Kings 18:16-46**
- fleeing to Horeb, scared of Jezebel **1 Kings 19:1-9a**
- Lord appears as still small voice **1 Kings 19:9b-18**
- calling of Elisha, successor **1 Kings 19:19-21**
- challenges Ahab over Naboth's vineyard **1 Kings 21:1-28**
- judgement on Ahaziah through Elijah **2 Kings 1:1-18**
- Elijah taken up to heaven (**double portion of his spirit for Elisha**) **2 Kings 2:1-12...**

Spoke with Boldness

- Speaking in face of a fearful, hostile, defensive crowd, hostile priests, and **very** hostile king!
- **Fear silences all of us from time to time:**
 - we fear what people will think of us
 - we fear that what we say will offend them
 - or we fear that what we say will make us look stupid...
- **Elijah's example is a challenge!**

Spoke to honour God

- His desire was that God's name be honoured
 - not his own, not simply "church" (religious establishment)
- **Elijah's example is a challenge!**

Spoke with Compassion

- Spoke with **compassion** for the lost people of Israel
 - doesn't seem obvious from the passage we read...
 - but his concern to speak was also driven by seeing the **lostness** of the people, **enslaved and deceived by Baal worship**, out of touch with the only Lord who could truly save them!
- **Elijah's example is a challenge!**

Spoke God's Word

- He spoke as he had heard, not making things up
 - as a consequence, what he said was **true**
 - not flattery, or self-promotion...
 - passed on what he had heard, so much so that in his words were God's words (**"this is the word of the Lord..."**)
- Deduce he was one who listened for what God had to say!

- Elijah's example is a challenge!

Spoke out of a Personal Relationship

- God appeared to him and spoke with him on several occasions
 - at times it almost seems like they were chatting - see **1 Kings 21:28-29!**
 - easy to say, and yet still hard to engage with!
 - really hard, perhaps especially in a good, evangelical, Bible reading and teaching church to admit that you are struggling in your personal walk with God!
 - we know God loves us, wants to draw close to us... so if we don't feel close to him, must be our fault, and we beat ourselves over the head about it - and won't admit it!
 - but Elijah's reality is that he did, was honest with his despair, with his fears, with his feelings of isolation...
- **It was a relationship** - honest, open, trusting, at times painful - **not a mere acquaintance**
- Elijah's example is a challenge!

Spoke to challenge human rebellion

- Confronting Ahab over Naboth's vineyard
- Confronting the people over Baal worship
- Elijah's example is a challenge!

Conclusion

- May we be those who speak in this way!
 - may we speak **with boldness**
 - may we speak **to honour God**
 - may we speak **with compassion**
 - may we speak **God's word**
 - may we speak **out of a personal relationship**
 - may we speak **to challenge human rebellion**