



**The Holy and Glorious Prophet Elias the Thesbite (Elijah the Tishbite)
Whom the Holy Church celebrates on July 20.**

Elias of great fame was from Thisbe or Thesbe, a town of Galaad (Gilead), beyond the Jordan. He was of priestly lineage, a man of solitary and ascetical character, clothed in a mantel of sheep skin, and girded about his loins with a leathern belt. His name is interpreted as “*Yah* is my God.” His zeal for the glory of God was compared to fire, and his speech for teaching and rebuke was likened unto a burning lamp. From this too he received the name Zealot. Therefore, set aflame with such zeal, he sternly reprov'd the impiety and lawlessness of Ahab and his wife Jezebel. He shut up heaven by means of prayer, and it did not rain for three years and six months. Ravens brought him food for his need when, at God’s command, he was hiding by the torrent of Horrath He multiplied the little flour and oil of the poor widow of Sarephtha of Sidon, who had given him hospitality in her home, and when her son died, he raised him up. He brought down fire from Heaven from Mount Carmel, and it burned up the sacrifice to God before all the people of Israel, that they might know the truth. At the torrent of Kisson he slew 450 false prophets and priests who worshipped idols and led the people astray. He received food wondrously at the hand of an Angel, and being strengthened by this food he walked for forty days and forty nights. He beheld God on Mount Horeb, as far as this is possible for human nature. He foretold the destruction of the house of Ahab, and the death of his son Ohozias; and as for the two captains of fifty that were sent by the king, he burned them for their punishment, bringing down fire from heaven. He divided the flow of the

Jordan and he and his disciple Elisseus passed through as it were on dry land; and finally, while speaking with him, Elias was suddenly snatched away by a fiery chariot in the year 895 B.C., and he ascended as though into heaven, whither God most certainly translated him alive, as He did Enoch (Gen. 5:24; IV Kings 2:11). But from thence also, after seven years, by means of an epistle he reproached Joram, the son of Josaphat, as it is written: "And there came a message in writing to him from Elias the Prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the way," and so forth (II Paraleipomenon 21:12). According to the opinion of the majority of the interpreters, this came to pass either through his disciple Elisseus, or through another Prophet when Elias appeared to them, even as he appeared on Mount Tabor to the disciples of Christ (see August 6).

Rest from labour. Wine and oil allowed.

Dismissal Hymn. Fourth Tone
Be quick to anticipate

THE Incarnate Angel and the Prophets' summit and boast, * the second forerunner of the coming of Christ our God, Elias, the glorious, * from above sent down his grace upon Elisseus: * he doth cast out sickness and doth cleanse lepers; * and unto all that honour him, he poureth forth streams of cures.

Kontakion. Second Tone

O RENOWNED Elias, Prophet and seer of the mighty works of God, who by thy word didst check the rain clouds: Intercede in our behalf with the only Friend of man.

Text: *The Great Horologion* © 1997 The Holy Transfiguration Monastery Brookline, Massachusetts 02445

Icons courtesy of The Holy Transfiguration Monastery

