

COMING TO THE FONT
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ELIJAH AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE ORDER
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The foundations of the Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel are described in the *Book of the First Monks* and the *The Ten Books of the Way of Life and Great Deeds of the Carmelites*, written by the Carmelite friar Felip Ribot in 1385. In it, Ribot describes the Spiritual foundations of the Order, which began with the Prophet Elijah and was passed through generations of prophets to the formal founding of the Order and giving of the Rule by Albert of Jerusalem in 1215.

ELIJAH AS MONK AND MYSTIC:

Book 1: Describes Elijah (Elias) as the founder of the Order, his way of life and the “method for reaching prophetic perfection”. (From the translator’s introduction to Book 1 of *The Ten Books*)

Under the inspiration of God, Elijah is the first man to lead the monastic and eremitical life God communicated to Elijah the goal which is perfection visibly and mystically This life is achieved by going to a deserted, or secluded place, begun with a pure heart and experiencing the Divine presence as a gift from God.

Elijah demonstrates several keys to the attaining of perfection:

- Renunciation of possessions
- “Crucify” all human desires
- Relinquish the Will
- Seek solitude, avoid contact, especially with women and live chastely
- Be full of love in the Love of God and Love of Neighbor

ELIJAH AND MARY: 1 KINGS 18:42-44

Elijah ends the drought

“So Ahab went up to eat and drink, while Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, crouched down to the earth, and put his head between his knees.

He said to his servant, “Go up and look out to sea.” He went up and looked, but reported, “There is nothing.” Seven times he said, “Go look again!”

And the seventh time the youth reported, “There is a cloud as small as a man’s hand rising from the sea.” Elijah said, “Go and say to Ahab, ‘Harness up and go down the mountain before the rain stops you.’”

•In the cloud, Elijah saw the Virgin Mary, the one who would bring life-giving water to the land.