

## 1<sup>st</sup> Kings Chapter 17

---

- As chapter 16 ends with the fulfilling of some very specific prophesy we move into the next phases of the Northern Kingdom and we're introduced to one of the greatest Old Testament prophets, **Elijah the Tishbite**. His ministry will extend through to **2 Kings Chapter 2**.
- His history is only recorded in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings, we aren't told anything about his background, family, or his call to ministry.
- But that he was a man sent from God is hard to deny as you will see.
- **Elijah is mentioned a few times in the NT as well.**

Speaking of John the Baptist:

**Luke 1:17** “And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

**Matthew 17:1-3** Moses & Elijah are both present at Jesus' transfiguration.

V: 1 Elijah: “*Yah or Yahweh is God*”, the Tishbite.

- (Map)Tishbe, located East of the Jordan River, East of Jabesh Gilead along the brook Cherith, 8 miles North of the River Jabbok.
- Elijah is sent by God to address Ahab, who was an evil king along with his evil wife Jezebel.
- “As the Lord God of Israel lives...” these things are about to happen - Elijah is declaring to this **Baal worshipping pagan king** who has been acting like there is no God. This king who's behaving like he won't be held accountable to God.
- **To this king who has been acting as though God is dead - Elijah is declaring that the True and the Living God is indeed alive, that He lives!**
- Elijah tells Ahab that there will be no rain until further notice. No rain = drought = famine in the land = God's judgment.

**Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 12** “<sup>1</sup>And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: <sup>2</sup>And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.” - “<sup>12</sup>The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in His season, and to bless all the work of thine hand...”

**Deuteronomy 28:15, 20, 23-24** “<sup>15</sup>But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His

commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:” - “<sup>20</sup>The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doing, whereby thou hast forsaken Me.” - “<sup>23</sup>And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. <sup>24</sup>The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust...”

- You need to understand the significance of this specific judgment; Baal was the Phoenicia fertility god who sent rain and bountiful crops, the rituals and rite associated with all of this are too gross and immoral to talk about - but when God speaks through Elijah and says there won't be any rain - he's declaring who really controls these things and there is nothing your phony so called "god" can do about it.
- Basically Elijah is telling Ahab that they are in for a rough ride, and that you have nobody to blame but yourself.

V: 2-4 The Lord speaks to Elijah to leave and hide himself.

- God speaks to His servants, and His servants hear Him:

**John 10:27** “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

- Elijah's message could not have been welcome news to Ahab - who being a fleshly man would very likely take it out on God's messenger Elijah.
- God tells Elijah to go to a specific place and tells him that he'll be able to drink from the brook, and that the ravens will bring him bread and meat.
- Raven's are an unclean bird, but this is what God has ordained.

V: 5-6 Elijah was a true man of God because he was obedient to the Word of God.

**Psalm 119:1-3** “<sup>1</sup>Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. <sup>2</sup>Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. <sup>3</sup>They also do no iniquity: they walk in His ways.”

- God showed Himself to be a God of His word as well; as Elijah stepped forward in obedience to the Word of God - what God said came true.
- The ravens brought bread and flesh / meat in the morning and in the evening.
- I wonder if it corresponded to the times of morning and evening prayer?

**Psalm 138:2** “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”

V: 7 “After a while” - we don’t know how long, but after a season things began to change. The brook dried up because there was no rain.

- God allowed Elijah to see the changes and in a sense was preparing Elijah to hear from God.
- Notice that Elijah didn’t move out on his own, seeing his circumstances dwindle, seeing that the brook was drying up - he could have rationalized in his mind that it was time to go, but he didn’t. God said to go there and that he would be taken care of - so he stays put until God says go somewhere else.

V: 8-9 ([Map](#))The Lord speaks and tells Elijah to move from where he is to Zarephath about 100 miles North West to the Mediterranean coast, which is near Sidon in Lebanon.

- God has prepared a place for his servant.

This sounds familiar to me:

**John 14:1-3** “<sup>1</sup>Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup>In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

- God not only prepared a place for his servant, but no doubt he’s preparing the servant’s heart as well.

**Jeremiah 29:11** “For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”

- Zarephath was near Sidon, Jezebel’s home town and the center of Baal worship.
- Elijah was also being sent to a widow’s home, who would support him as he waited on the Lord for further instructions. Elijah would be surrounded by the things he despised, reduced to being supported by a Gentile, non-Jewish woman in a pagan place.

V: 10-11 Again, Elijah is obedient to the word of the Lord.

**Proverbs 8:32** “Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep My ways.”

- As Elijah arrives, again everything is just as God said it would be and he sees “the” widow - God informed him of the exact person he was to deal with.
- Elijah starts out asking for a drink of water, and the woman just goes and gets it. Remember that there was a drought and famine, water was scarce - but she went to give to him of what she had.
- Water is something that is never refused in that area, it’s part of the culture, if you ask a person for a drink of water, they will never refuse you a drink.
- Then he adds to his request, further asking for some bread.

V: 12 The widow, who was probably very poor and at this time destitute responds that she has very little in the way of resources - that she has just enough meal / flour left and a little bit of oil that she was going to use to make a small cake for she and her son, then they would die, meaning they have no hope beyond that.

V: 13-14 Elijah comforts and encourages her with the Word of God.

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4** “<sup>3</sup>Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; <sup>4</sup>who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

- God had given Elijah His words of comfort, and now Elijah turns those words around and gives them to the widow woman.
- The widow is instructed to step out in faith and make him a cake, and trust that the barrel of meal and the cruz of oil will be miraculously replenished until the drought and famine is over.

**2 Corinthians 5:7** “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

V: 15-16 The widow went and did as Elijah had said, walking in obedience - and they all ate and were supplied for “many days” - probably for about 2<sup>1/2</sup> years.

- By doing this she was, in effect, giving God the first place. When she obeyed, she learned the precious lesson that those who put God first in their lives never lack the necessities of life.

This is the same lesson that Jesus taught:

**Matthew 6:33** “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

- Miraculously the barrel always had enough meal, and the cruz of oil had enough oil.
- This reminds me of the manna from heaven appearing each day as the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, also of when Jesus fed the 5,000 and the 4,000 multiplying the bread and the fish.

V: 17-18      The widow woman's son becomes sick and dies - no breath left in him.

- She blamed God, somehow figuring that there was a connection between Elijah's presence in her home and the death of her son.

“... **Art thou come to call my sin to remembrance?**” Guilty conscience?

- Granted sometimes bad things happen because of sin in our lives, the repercussions of sin, but not always.
- Job's testimony would indicate that sometimes bad things happen to good people - and not because they were in sin, but because God wants to be glorified in some way through their lives.

**John 9:1-3**    “<sup>1</sup>And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. <sup>2</sup>And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? <sup>3</sup>Jesus answered, neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be manifest in him.”

- Jesus went on to spit on the ground, using His spittle to make a little bit of clay and applied it to the eyes of the blind man who was healed - and God was glorified.
- The widow woman simply hasn't seen this play out all the way yet, at this point to her death is final - and normally it is.

V: 19-22      Elijah asks to take her son, he doesn't just take him. She gives him over to the man of God, she lets go.

- Elijah takes him upstairs to his room or loft and begins to cry out to the Lord.
- Elijah continues to cry out to the Lord, and stretched himself out upon the dead boy's corpse 3 times.

**Psalm 34: 15**      “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.”

- Paul prayed 3 times concerning the thorn in his flesh.

- Elijah did not give up! He persevered in prayer!

“... *the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.*”

**James 5:16** “... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

- *This is the first recorded instance in the Bible of the resurrection of a dead person back to life.*
- The Bible describes physical death as separation of the body from the spirit.

**James 2:26** “For as the body without the spirit is dead...”

- Spiritual death is separation of the consciousness or soul from God.

**Ecclesiastes 12:7** “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

- God demonstrates through Elijah that He has power over life and death.

**1 Corinthians 15:55-57** “<sup>55</sup>O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? <sup>56</sup>The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the Law. <sup>57</sup>But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

V: 23-24 Elijah presents the widow’s son back to her alive and she glorifies God and that the Word of the Lord is true. She knows that Elijah is a man of God – in other words – that God is real.

**Hebrews 11:6** “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

- It was after Elijah stretched himself out on the child for the 3rd time that the Lord raised him from the dead - a reminder that our Savior rose from the dead on the 3rd day.
- During the time that Elijah lived with the widow and her son, she saw that God was the sustainer of life - the meal and the oil didn’t run out, this gave her hope.
- The widow saw that God is the giver of life - the boy was raised from the dead.
- As a Gentile she showed faith in the God of Israel.
- What was the final thing that convinced her
- She saw the resurrection of the Son...

**Romans 10:9** “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,  
and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead,  
thou shalt be saved.