

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW-PART 1
1 KINGS 17:8-16

Introduction

Last week we saw how Elijah's life at Cherith was going pretty well as he was **doing the will of the LORD, enjoying the leadership of the LORD and enjoying the provision of the LORD**, that is, until the brook where the LORD had him staying dried up!

Sometimes there can come situations where we might find ourselves facing a desperate situation or two! Situations in which we find some previous resource or resources are limited or even depleted.

When those times come we might question what God is doing or why God is allowing us to go through those lean times.

I. WE SEE ELIJAH WAS MOVED BY THE LORD! (17:8-9)

Understand that the changes that Elijah saw in the brook brought a change in what the LORD wanted Elijah to do! Sometimes that can be the case in our lives too!

In the first seven verses, Elijah had done what God had asked. But there was a change coming that was first signaled to him by the dried up brook and then clarified by the Word of the LORD!

After the brook dried up the Bible says, ***"The Word of the LORD came unto him."*** (Vs 8)

Understand that when our present resources get depleted, it is NOT a desperate situation with God! God knows where we are...God knows what He would have us to do next...God knows how He will provide for us!

The will of God for Elijah was revealed to him by the Word of the LORD! (vs. 9) The LORD revealed that it was time for him to move!

If we want to know God's will we must listen to the LORD!
Now the LORD will not speak to us audibly as He did Elijah!

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW-PART 1
1 KINGS 17:8-16

Nevertheless, the LORD uses His Word to both speak to us and to give us direction for what He has for our lives!

Notice that God revealed His will one step at a time. He was originally told to go to Cherith, which he did! He is now told to go to Zarephath! We must learn to be patient and take one step at a time as the LORD reveals to us His will!

The will of God is like the headlights of a car. They give just enough light to go forward safely.

Elijah's resources became depleted and God gave him further direction! **God is always on time! His timing is accurate! He comes through in the nick of time! This pattern is seen over and again in the Scriptures!**

When Abraham was ready to sacrifice Isaac, God spoke up and gave Abraham directions.

When the three Hebrew children were cast in the fiery furnace, the LORD walked with them in the fire.

When Daniel was cast into the lions' den, the Lord shut the mouths of the lions for that moment.

When Moses and the children of Israel were pursued by the Egyptian army and had their backs to the Red Sea, God in His timing parted the waters and guided them to safety.

On the eve of Peter's execution, the Lord had him freed from the prison where he was held.

On the night before the execution of Mordecai, a sleepless king found out that Mordecai saved his life and was not rewarded. He was rewarded the next morning.

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW-PART 1
1 KINGS 17:8-16

When Lazarus was sick and Mary and Martha thought the Lord was four days too late, He was still right on time!

God's timing is always on schedule! For this reason we need to wait on the Lord when we are at the end of ourselves and our resources!

In the early days of Dallas Theological Seminary, there was a serious financial crisis. If a large amount of money was not received on a certain day, it would seriously endanger the existence of the school. In those days, the president of Dallas Seminary, Lewis Sperry Chafer, would often be visited by a great Bible teacher who taught part-time at the seminary....Dr. Harry Ironside. Dr. Ironside happened to be at the school on that crucial day of the financial deadline. Chafer, Ironside, and other men of the school gathered in Chafer's office for a prayer meeting. They were asking the Lord to meet the financial need. Dr. Ironside prayed what came to be known as one of his famous prayers. He said, "Oh God, you own the cattle on a thousand hills. Lord, won't you sell some of those cattle and send us the money?"

The secretary came from the office and said, "Dr. Chafer, there is someone here to see you." Dr. Chafer told her to send him into the office. The man asked, "Are you Dr. Chafer?" He said, "Yes, I am." The man proceeded and said, "Sir, I am a cattle rancher, and I don't know what came over me, but God told me to sell some of my cattle and give you the money." He handed Dr. Chafer the money and the amount was exactly what the school needed to meet their financial need and alleviate a crisis. Amen!

God met Elijah's need by changing Elijah's circumstances. He changed both his location and the method of his provision. God takes care of His people! *Philippians 4:19—But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

If some change of life puts us in dire circumstances, we need to rest in the LORD Himself and then look to Him and His Word for direction for the next step in our life!

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW-PART 1
1 KINGS 17:8-16

Elijah was instructed to go to Zarephath which means "*refinement*." Elijah's faith and obedience are tested and refined again at Zarephath.

Job 23:10—But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

II. WE SEE GOD'S PROMISE OF PROVISION! (17:10-11)

God promised to meet Elijah's need through a poverty-stricken widow during a time of famine.

He can meet our needs too! Sometimes from the most unexpected, and illogical places.

When Elijah arrived, the widow just happens to be at the right place at the right time. Was this luck? No! God was directing the steps of both of them.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. God has a way of putting people in our paths at the right time and at the right place to meet our need and encourage us. He did the same thing for Abraham's servant when he was looking for a wife for Isaac. Rebekah was at the well when he arrived.

Elijah requested water and bread which were valuable in a time of famine. His request was a test for the widow. It would demand sacrifice, faith, and unselfishness. When we get to where we're scraping the bottom of the barrel there is a tendency to:

Be selfish

Doubt and be discouraged.

Rationalize and offer excuses why you should not sacrifice and serve the Lord.

III. WE SEE THE PITIFUL PLIGHT OF THIS WIDOW! (17:12)

We can see this widow was in bad shape. She was having to scrap the bottom of the barrel just to eat a final meal with her son!

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW-PART 1
1 KINGS 17:8-16

However Elijah called on her to not fear, but to have faith in God and to rest upon the promises of God! (*Vs 13-14*)

If this widow was obedient and unselfish, she would be a great blessing to Elijah. As God provided for her, He would be providing for Elijah too. God was trying to teach her faith, trust in the Lord, compassion, and unselfishness.

IV. WE SEE THE PERFORMANCE OF GOD'S WORD! (17:15-16)

The widow trusted God's promises by faith and God kept His word, meeting her needs. She is tested and challenged to put God first, to sacrifice, and she did. The Lord, in turn, multiplied the little that she had. She was provided for by the LORD until the drought ceased!

Little is much when God is in it.

We are challenged over and over again to put the Lord first in our life.
Matthew 6:33—But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

That is what this widow did!