

Let us also consider that Mark also records Jesus being surmised as a resurrected Elijah by those around Herod (6:15)<sup>1</sup> and by those around Jesus' disciples (8:28);<sup>2</sup> He furthermore records the appearance of Elijah on a mountain with Jesus (and Moses and Peter, James & John) (9:4),<sup>3</sup> a discussion occurs in which Elijah was promised (9:11),<sup>4</sup> and of course we remember when Jesus was mistaken for calling on Elijah for deliverance (15:35).<sup>5</sup> Since all three Synoptic Gospel writers appear to give virtually equal weight to Elijah, it seems as though the early Christian belief was that Elijah was to be closely associated with Jesus, yes, but also with John the Baptist as in this context here before us.

It seems fitting, then, to consider Elijah. As you turn, then, to 1<sup>st</sup> Kings, chapter 17, I'll read to you this verse from Proverbs:

*Proverbs 27:8 Like a bird that wanders from its nest Is a man who wanders from **his place**.*

Here's something that will help you in your marriage, your job, your citizenship, and your address. The flipside are two amazingly polar opposites: discontentment & complacency. The discontented person is always interested in leaving the place God has for them while the complacent person is disinterested in finding God's place for them. Both are dangerous, and this passage will guide us today.

**1 Kings 17:1 And Elijah the Tishbite**, doubtless a town in Gilead. **of the inhabitants of Gilead**, The ASV says "the sojourners of Gilead" ... **2 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 3 "Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan.** So he was told to leave Samaria where he saw Ahab and to go east to the Jordan River.

**4 And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.** **8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 9 "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you."** Can you imagine the confusion this woman feels knowing that she has almost nothing with which to meet the need (verse 12)?

**10 So he arose and went to Zarephath.** Some 60 miles away. **And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink."** **11 And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."** So the Brook becomes a "cup" and the bird becomes a "hand."

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<sup>1</sup>As does Luke.

<sup>2</sup>As do Matthew and Luke.

<sup>3</sup>As do Matthew and Luke.

<sup>4</sup>Matthew also records this.

<sup>5</sup>As does Matthew.



14 For thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth.’ ” See 18:1 for a forecast of “year 4.” 15 So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. Now we know that “many days” can mean “years.” 16 The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah.

Some observations (or problems) with being there:

1. There doesn't appear to be a shortcut for the reverence for the “Word of the LORD” (17:5,8).
2. There is rarely nearby. It can be quite inconvenient (first 25 miles; then 60 miles).
3. This can be your payoff after showing great courage (not much of a payoff). Is it because the courage was public, and true faith is grown in private? This is a lot like Philip being removed from the revival in which he was the prime mover to a much more solitary place (Acts 8).
4. The provision of “there” is not always permanent, and that is when God will give us the next “there” (17:7).
5. There is precious little company there.

Some benefits (or results) of being there:

1. **You get to eat.**
  - A. Determine God's promises are true. Little obedience gives little faith (“go there and you'll get”).
  - B. Find yourselves in unusual circumstances (“ravens”).
2. **Other people get to eat: Not everybody was able to eat (Luke 4).** Training them to stretch their own faith. If she doesn't feed Elijah, she doesn't eat (17:13).
3. **God's work is accomplished.** God didn't have this man of God travel 90 miles for nothing. Inconvenient? Yes. Busy work? No! God is keeping this man out of trouble.

What does this mean, then? Two men, John the Baptist and Jesus—near kinsmen, were often mistaken for their resemblance to what people knew about Elijah the prophet. What did they know about Elijah the prophet? One thing they knew was that if there was a there in their lives from the Heavenly Father, these men found the there, got there, and stayed there.