

In the Will of God - Elijah - Part 2

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Introduction.

I Kings 17:8-24 deals with Elijah and the widow who cared for him. She thought she was about to die yet Elijah instructed her to make him cake and then her oil and four would not fail. It also deals with the miracle of the resurrection of her son after he dies. This miracle taught the woman that Elijah was a man of God. It also taught her that the word of God from his mouth was true.

I. Last night we left Elijah by a drying brook. Tonight we want to see Elijah in three relationships; Elijah and Jehovah; Elijah and the widow, and Elijah and the widow's son.

A. Elijah and Jehovah.

1. The word of God came to Elijah at the point of his greatest need to point him in a new direction.

- a. Do you give God the option of changing your plan?
- b. Elijah had been in a quiet place but would now begin a public ministry.
- c. We need to hear the command of God to our hearts to hide in God, but hiding too long will make us comfortable in seclusion.
- d. The quiet place is the secret to effectiveness in ministry with people.
- e. Jesus' disciples needed to learn that lesson at the Transfiguration.

1. Peter said it was good for them to be with Jesus on the Mount and wanted to stay there.

2. Conferences are good but we should not stay here.

3. We are called to a ministry of involvement with people.

2. God told Elijah to rise and get to Zarephath.

- a. God had already transplanted Elijah several times and now once again.
- b. This brings him to soil most conducive to spiritual growth.
- c. God moves us in order to make us more fruitful.
- d. This trip was over 100 miles on foot across desert during drought.
- e. At this time there was a premium on the head of Elijah. (1 Kings 18:10)
- f. God commanded Elijah to go into Gentile country, the land of Baal worship.

1. Jonah fled Gentile country out of disgust.
2. Jonah returned only under compulsion of God.
3. The result was the greatest revival under the worst missionary.
4. A contemporary book on archaeology will show how difficult it was for Jewish people to minister in Gentile nations.
5. Jezebel had introduced Baal worship in Israel.

B. Elijah and the widow.

1. The widow of Sidon was commanded to care for Elijah.
 - a. If I were Elijah staying by a drying brook I would have been making new plans.
 - b. Elijah had learned that to obey God is better than sacrifice.
 - c. He arrives in Zarephatah to find this widow preparing for her death.
 - d. God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldea where he also ran into a famine, yet this was the will of God.
 1. Abraham went to Egypt which was a mistake.
 2. Many students come to seminary and quickly run out of funds, yet it is a mistake to run; rather they should trust God.
2. Elijah has three requests for the widow.
 - a. He asked for a drink and she obliged him.
 - b. He asked for a morsel of bread and she told him of her plans to die.
 - c. He told her not to fear but to make him a cake first and then eat herself with her son.
 1. She thought there was only enough flour for one cake yet she obeyed Elijah's request.
 2. In response to her obedience he promised her unfailing provision.
 3. The result proved that the word of the Lord does not fail.
 4. I nearly had a tragic car accident lately and a passenger blessed his luck, which provoked my ire since there is no luck for the Christian.
 5. Elijah arrived just in time to meet the need of the widow so she could obey God and provide for the prophet.

C. Elijah and the widow's son. (1 Kings 17:17-24)

1. Elijah may have been with the widow for two years and one barrel of flour and one jar of oil did not fail.

a. Explaining faith to an unbeliever is futile.

b. I was trying to buy a car and had to explain to the salesman that professors get paid if the money comes in.

c. The seminary never had a surplus yet we always got paid.

d. Once during the Depression we almost had to close the seminary. Dr. Ironsides prayed that God would sell some of those cattle on a thousand hills to provide for them. That day a cattleman sold some cattle and donated a large sum of money to the seminary.

2. The son of the widow became terminally ill.

a. The woman must have wondered how the miracle of the oil and flour jives with the death of her son.

b. She asked if Elijah had come to call her sin into remembrance.

c. Elijah doesn't rebuke her but prays for the boy until he is resurrected.

d. The word of the Lord had come to Elijah several times in this chapter and each time he obeyed, so now the Lord heard the voice of Elijah.

e. Then the woman said "Now I know you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is true."

1. The miracle of the oil and flour hadn't convinced her.

2. Jesus also fed thousands that were unconvinced.

3. When the woman saw the miracle of life she believed.

4. People today need to see the miracle of Jesus' resurrection at work in you.

5. What is there in your life that needs supernatural explanation?

6. We don't need more people on the church rosters; neither do we need to condemn church folks for their failures. We need the life of Christ in us.