

God Provides for Elijah in Miraculous Ways
1 Kings 17:1-14
March 15, 2015

During the fifty years after Solomon/Rehoboam's reign (where we were last week), mostly wicked kings rose to power during the time between Rehoboam till Elijah (where we are this week):

Abijam- Judah (evil)	Baasha- Israel- (bad)	Omri- Israel (bad)
Asa- Judah (good to bad)	Elah- Israel (bad)	Ahab- Israel (bad)
Nadab- Israel (bad)	Zimri- Israel (bad)	

Ahab, King of Israel reigned for **22** yrs. In that time he:

Did more evil than any king before him (1 Kings 16:30).
Married **Jezebel** (bad move).
Served Baal and worshiped him (not a personal god, none others are).
Did more to provoke the Lord to anger than any king before him (1 Kings 16:33).

Suddenly, **Elijah**, the prophet, appears on the scene. He speaks during a time when following the Lord and speaking what He said was very **unpopular**!

Following the Lord, at times, may be challenging and even difficult, but it can also be very **rewarding**! God told us in this world we would have trouble, but to take heart as He has overcome the world. (John 16:33)

Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow."
Luke 4:24-26

This is Jesus speaking, validating the account of Elijah in 1 Kings!

After Elijah gives the words (from God) to Ahab that there will not be any rain for 3 ½ years (James 5:17), he is then sent away! He was leaving because God told him so. What looked to be like Elijah is running for his life, we find in chapter 17 that God was using this to minister to the widow. **God was protecting and providing for him while all the while revealing Himself to the widow, who was not an Israelite.**

In this account in 1 Kings 17 we see:

1) God provides for Elijah.

Elijah appears on the scene and then tells King Ahab there will be no rain except at his word. In fact, in James 5:17, we see where Elijah prays that there is no rain. He knew the God he served was the real God.

Elijah is then basically on the "run", but God provides for him through the brook at the Kerith Ravine and by the ravens in 1 Kings 17:3-4 and then again through the widow.

Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"
Matthew 6:26-30

God cares for his people, even in the difficult times.

2) God provides through Elijah.

Elijah was not so focused on his situation that he thought only of himself, but through him the Lord was going to meet the widow's need as well.

The widow trusted Elijah and obviously, to an extent, she trusted God. After all, she had nothing else. Maybe she thought, "It can't hurt". I believe she was desperate!

Are you desperate this morning? Are you desperate for the Lord?

In her desperation she trusted God. Belief + Action = Faith. She trusted in God!

God was meeting a need for Elijah and for the widow.

You and I, through God, are often "need meet-ers." God is the Ultimate Need Meet-er, but He may use you to meet a need.

In your "journey" God often desires to use you to meet the needs (and not just obvious physical needs) of your friend, child, spouse, colleague, or even your enemy.

God is often just looking for an obedient follower to meet a need of others.

Oftentimes, God will provide His love, grace, tough love, kindness, hope, and redemption through us.

Christ's ambassadors verse: *Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.* **2 Corinthians 5:20**

We are a light in a dark world!

3) God provides faith for the widow.

It is true that often in our most difficult times God does great things; He brings us to the point of desperation! That which seems like the worst thing can often bring what we need. This was true for the widow.

And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." **1 Kings 17:21**

Through Elijah's pleading with God in prayer, ultimate faith is realized for the widow. Elijah's answered prayer is what opened the woman's eyes to who God really was!

Proof that even King Ahab's wickedness was used to draw the widow to the Lord.

Not only does God provide for His people, but He uses His people to meet the needs of others!

This morning, who has God used to meet your needs? You can thank them, but really thank God!

Ask how God might want to use me to meet the needs of others; Spiritual, emotional, physical.

Remember, God often uses us to meet others' needs when we are on our knees in prayer.

Always remember, in all of this, God is working in ways in which we are not even aware.