

Elijah

God's man to a nation in crisis

When God sends you to the last place you ever expected.

Lesson 3

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1 KINGS 17:13 AND ELIJAH SAID UNTO HER, FEAR NOT; GO AND DO AS THOU HAST SAID: BUT MAKE ME THEREOF A LITTLE CAKE FIRST, AND BRING IT UNTO ME, AND AFTER MAKE FOR THEE AND FOR THY SON.

Last week, we saw how that God leads a person one step at a time. We read the passage how the Lord orders the steps of a good man. Following God's will is what Christians must do but there are sometimes that we do not understand why God is sending us there.

I. When God judges a nation it affects both the righteous and wicked

1 Kings 17:7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

Matthew 5:45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Elijah obeyed the Lord and went to the brook at Cherith. But, because the judgment of God was on the nation, the brook eventually dried up. When a nation undergoes the judgment of God, it affects both the righteous and unrighteous. There were more than 7,000 men who had not bowed their knees to the worship of Baal and the famine affected them also.

1 Kings 19:18 KJV "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."

God takes care of them through the famine and drought. We must understand that the Christian is in the world and is affected by the things of the world, even the judgment of God on a na-

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1 Kings 17:8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, **9** Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. **10** So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. **11** And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. **12** And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. **13** And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. **14** For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. **15** And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. **16** And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.

tion.

Elijah stayed until God sent him away to continue to protect and provide for him. Elijah is an example of a man who was obedient to the Word of the Lord.

II. Where God sent Elijah - to the last place anyone would expect

KJV 1 Kings 17:8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, 9 Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

A. The city of Zarephath

1. City in Jezebel's homeland

ZAREPHATH smelting-shop, "a workshop for the refining and smelting of metals", a small Phoenician town, now Surafend, about a mile from the coast, almost midway on the road between Tyre and Sidon. Here Elijah sojourned with a poor widow during the "great famine," when the "heaven was shut up three years and six months" (Luke 4:26; 1 Kings 17:10). It is called Sarepta in the New Testament (Luke 4:26).

2. City under King Ethbaal, Queen Jezebel's father

1 Kings 16:31 KJV "And it came to

pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him."

The city that God sent Elijah to was under the authority and rule of King Ethbaal that was Jezebel's father. Elijah pronounced judgment against King Ahab who was King Ethbaal's son-in-law. And, God sends Elijah to a town in his country.

3. City and area that wor-

shipped Baal as god

The area that God sent Elijah to was deep in the worship of the idol god Baal.

III. Who God sent Elijah to - the last person anyone would expect

1 Kings 17:10 KJV "So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, be-

hold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink."

God sent Elijah to a widow woman to take care of him. God did not only send Elijah to be taken care of but to take care



of the widow.

The ones that are described in the Bible as needing to be taken care of are the widows and orphans. Here God sends Elijah to a widow and her son.

A. Sent unto a widow woman

James 1:27 KJV "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

B. Sent unto a poor woman

When Elisha was traveling, God used a wealthy woman to take care of him as he traveled by her house. When a famine came into the land, God used a poor woman to take care of Elijah. God is able to use any means necessary to take care of His people. However, His people must be obedient to follow His will.

C. Sent unto a Gentile woman

God sent Elijah to a foreign nation, a Gentile nation. We would expect that God would have sent Elijah to a Hebrew to take care of him. We would have never expected God to send Elijah to a Gentile but He did. God's way are far above ours.

IV. What God required - the last morsel in the jar

1 Kings 17:10-12 KJV "So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a

little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

A. Desperate conditions of the Widow's family

The woman had lost her husband. She only had her son with her. She and her son were in desperate times. She had no money, no savings, no stocks, and no employment. She had no hope of the future. She had only enough food left for her and her son for one last meal. She had come to the conclusion that she was going to make one last meal and then she and her son would starve to death because she had no means of getting more food.

Because of the area that she lived in, she was probably a worshipper of Baal but had seen that Baal could not help her because of her circumstances. She was a woman who had no hope.

B. Direct request from Elijah

Elijah was lead to the woman and he made a request that many of us today would have called ridiculous. Had someone requested that of us, we would have denied and not thought a second time about it. Remember the old saying that a bird in the hand is better than two in the bushes. The widow woman had one last meal, just enough for her and her son.

Elijah requested that she give him some water and a meal. She relayed her condition to him, but he did not change his request to her, but he gave her something else.

C. Divine promise from the Lord

1Kings 17:13-14 KJV "And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for

thy son. For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.”

Elijah began the defense of his request for the meal with two very important words, ‘Fear not’. This woman had a tremendous fear of what was going to happen to her and her son. She knew how much food she had. She knew the possibility of getting more during the famine was nil. She knew that her god had not provided for her by giving a bountiful harvest. Elijah told her not to fear what was going to happen because her future was secure in the Lord.

The next important statement was that the God of Israel was going to take care of her and her son. She had trusted in Baal for her family and he had failed. Now, Elijah comes on the scene and tells her that if she will trust in the Lord God of Israel, He will take care of her. Elijah gives her hope for the future. Elijah gives her a reason to look forward to the future.

V. What God does - the last thing anyone would expect

1 Kings 17:15 And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. 16 And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.

A. Faith is seen by actions, not by words

James 2:14-26 “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and

filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

She testified of her faith in the Lord by being obedient to the request of Elijah. She went and made the last meal that she had for the man of God, trusting that God would take care of her needs.

She gave all that she had to the Lord and the Lord blessed her by providing for her daily needs.

B. Faith brings the blessing of God

Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Psalms 37:25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed beg-

ging bread.

VI. Lessons

A. We need to learn that God is aware of the daily needs of our life.

Matthew 6:25-34 KJV "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

B. We need to learn that in times of scarceness, there can be some of the most rewarding spiri-

tual blessings.

1. God provided for Israel in the wilderness.

2. God provided for Israel Elijah during the famine.

3. God provided for the prophet's widow (2 Kings 4:6)

4. God provided for the 5,000

5. God provides for the saints (Philippians 4:19)

C. We need to learn that obedience to the Word of God is essential in God providing for our daily needs.

