

Generosity Pt 4 *The Biggest Barrier to Being Generous*

Message to Conversation Guide

1 Kings 17:1-24

1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.”

2 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: 3 “Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. 4 **You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there.**”

5 So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

7 Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. 8 Then the word of the Lord came to him: 9 “Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. **I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.**” 10 **So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?”** 11 **As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.”**

12 “As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. **I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.**”

13 Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. 14 For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.’” 15 She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. 16 For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah. NIV (See **1 Kings 17:17-24**)

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the marriage union of Ahab with Jezebel. What did this decision ultimately lead to regarding the nation of Israel?

1 Kings 16:29-33

29 In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years. 30 Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him. 31 He not only considered

it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. 32 He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. 33 Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to arouse the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel, than did all the kings of Israel before him. NIV

2. Why are spiritually unequal unions often problematic and complicated?

2 Cor. 6:14

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? NIV

Deut. 22:10

10 Do not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together. NIV

3. What kind of god was Baal? How does this connect with Elijah calling for it not to rain for over 3 years?

1 Kings 17:1

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4. God's provision for Elijah was linked to specific place. Discuss the idea of "the provision zone" being in the place God has called you to be.

1 Kings 17:4

4 You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there." NIV

5. Ravens were unclean birds and an unusual means to receive food. Discuss that God sometimes uses unlikely sources to take care of us. What are some examples of this in your life? (See **Deut. 14:14**)
6. God cares about Elijah and the widow of Zarepath; meaning he cares about the ministry of a church and the people that give to that church. Discuss the widow's fear of giving and why it was essential for her to do. Why is it significant that she give first before the provision comes?

1 Kings 17:13

13 Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. NIV