

## The Waiting Game Part 2 - Lessons from Elijah

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### Message to Conversation Guide

1. Some things that we wait for are really not that important but trivial. Other things however that we have to wait for are very important. List and discuss some trivial things we need to wait for as well as more important things that we have to wait for sometimes.
2. Elijah was a prophet in the ninth century BC that confronted the spiritual waywardness of Ahab the King of the nation of Israel (Northern Kingdom). According to the verses below what spiritual errors did Ahab engage in?

#### **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*

3. Why was the judgement, pronounced by Elijah, that it would not rain until he said so significant in light of Israel worshipping Baal?

#### **1 Kings 17:1**

*17 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." NIV*

#### **James 5:17-18**

*17 Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops. NIV*

*He (Baal) was also called the Lord of Rain and Dew, the two forms of moisture that were indispensable for fertile soil in Canaan. In Ugaritic and Hebrew, Baal's epithet as the storm god was He Who Rides on the Clouds. ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA*

4. The gravity of Ahab's sin was that his decision to worship Baal was not a decision that didn't effect others. In reality when we influence others in a wrong direction we are accountable to the Lord for our toxic influence. Read the verses below and discuss this principle.

**Matt 18:6-8**

6 "If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. 7 Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! **Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come!** NIV (also see **Luke 17:1-3, James 3:1**)

**1 Cor 15:33**

33 Do not be misled: **"Bad company corrupts good character."** NIV

5. The widow that Elijah challenged to give him bread when she had almost nothing conveys the importance of giving and serving out of our low supply. When we give and serve when we have hardly anything we are resupplied with what we were originally lacking. Discuss this principle.

**1 Kings 17:7-16**

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

6. The drought that Elijah predicted fell upon the land that he himself lived in. However, God provided for Elijah first through a brook and ravens, through a poor widow and ultimately an angel from heaven. Discuss the principle that God is always our source although he uses different means and tools to provide for us.