

1 Kings 16-17

Good evening and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your Bibles to 1 Kings 16? We're gonna study both 16 & 17 tonight as we continue to see the wickedness of the kings of Israel. Then when we get to chapter 17, we'll get our first introduction to the prophet named Elijah.

The title of tonight's message is DARING FAITH

Let's pray

As is the temptation with every rags to riches story, the temptation to fulfill personal ambition when taking power can easily override any desire to glorify God. Such is the case of Israel's newest King, his name is Baasha.

1-4

1 Then the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani, against Baasha, saying: 2 "Inasmuch as I lifted you out of the dust and made you ruler over My people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam, and have made My people Israel sin, to provoke Me to anger with their sins, 3 surely I will take away the posterity of Baasha and the posterity of his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. 4 The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Baasha and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the fields." We saw last week in chapter 14 that this same judgment was promised and fulfilled against the house of Jeroboam. And God pronounces the same judgment on the household of Baasha. It was considered a special disgrace to have your dead corpse desecrated and kept from proper burial.

5-7

5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 6 So Baasha rested with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah. Then Elah his son reigned in his place.

7 And also the word of the LORD came by the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD in provoking Him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he killed them. **Psalm 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.**

God is slow to anger and abounding in mercy, but there is a time when He will pour out His wrath.

This is the reason why I'm fully convinced of a pre-trib rapture. God reserves His wrath for His enemies, not His children. We see this in Noah and the ark, Sodom and Gomorrah, When you read Revelation and see God's wrath poured out, I don't believe any of us will be here.

8 In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel, and reigned two years in Tirzah.

9 Now his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him as he was in Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, steward of his house in Tirzah. Elah gets inebriated, and becomes an easy target...

10 And Zimri went in and struck him and killed him in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his place. Another king of Israel assassinated.

11-14

11 Then it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he was seated on his throne, that he killed all the household of Baasha; he did not leave him one male, neither of his relatives nor of his friends. 12 Thus Zimri destroyed all the household of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet, 13 for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, by which they had sinned and by which they had made Israel sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols.

14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Again we see that God is faithful to His word.

15-20

15 In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri had reigned in Tirzah seven days. And the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. 16 Now the people who were encamped heard it said, "Zimri has conspired and also has killed the king." So all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp.

17 Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon, and they besieged Tirzah. 18 And it happened, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house down upon himself with fire, and died, 19 because of the sins which he had committed in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he had committed to make Israel sin.

20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and the treason he committed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? After he killed Elah, and slaughtered the house of

Baasha, Zimri realized he was not the people's choice. They wanted General Omri to rein instead.

When Zimri heard that the people were rebelling against him, he lit his palace on fire and took his own life after reigning only seven days.

If you're keeping score, of her first 5 kings two were assassinated, and one committed suicide.

21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri. 22 But the people who followed Omri prevailed over the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. So Tibni died and Omri reigned. Remember in the south, Asa, became king in the 20th year of Jeroboam – and reined 41 years. That means Asa's reign overlapped the first 7 kings of Israel. Judah enjoyed a remarkable stability. Israel was in constant turmoil.

23 In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel, and reigned twelve years. Six years he reigned in Tirzah. 24 And he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; then he built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, Samaria, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill. With the palace burned by Zimri's hand, Omri found a new city from which he would reign: Samaria. Now Samaria becomes the capital city of the ten northern tribes of Israel.

Several features made Samaria a logical choice. First, since it was a new city it was politically neutral. It had no tribal

association. Second, it was built on a hill 328 feet high. Its elevation made it easier to defend against ancient armies.

25-26

25 Omri did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all who were before him. 26 For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols. This makes Omri the sixth king of Israel since the division of the once-unified kingdom. Jeroboam was the first king, and each of the five kings after him followed in the evil ways of Jeroboam.

27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and the might that he showed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

28 So Omri rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. Then Ahab his son reigned in his place. Asa reigned for 41 years in total. During his 41 years, there were seven different kings of Israel.

29 In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. Ahab will rule 22 years, and they'll prove to be the darkest, most wicked, 22 years in the history of the nation.

30 Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. Each of the previous kings of Israel walked in the wicked pattern of Jeroboam. Ahab distinguished himself in being worse than Jeroboam.

Now over the last couple of weeks our text in the bible has been pretty quick to move through the kings, but now we slow down, and zoom in on some of the notable events that happened with King Ahab on the the throne.

31 And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. ” Jezebel is a name you’ve likely heard before. Even to this day several cultures refer to an evil, sinister, treacherous, plotting, and conniving woman, as “a Jezebel”.

Remember, Jeroboam had established a subtle form of idolatry, but as we’re about to see, Ahab and Jezebel pulled out all the stops. They promoted no-holds-barred, blatant idolatry by introducing the evil system of Baal worship. The Jewish historian Josephus says Jezebel taught the worship of Baal to Ahab.

Jezebel’s goal was to make Baal the god of Israel. We’ll see in 1 Kings 18 Jezebel even launched a campaign in Israel to exterminate the prophets of Jehovah.

Make no mistake Jezebel was a vile and violent woman.

32 Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. Baal worship was hideous. He was a god of the Canaanites - the god of nature. The Canaanites believed that Baal controlled agriculture, and the processes of

reproduction. Baal worship came with temple prostitution, and child sacrifice in order to make the ground more fertile for crops.
33-34

33 And Ahab made a wooden image.[fn] Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. 34 In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, according to the word of the LORD, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun.[fn] What's this talking about? Well this is the fulfillment of a 500 year old prophecy. **Joshua 6:26 Then Joshua charged them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man before the LORD who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates."**

Joshua's prophecy said whoever tries to rebuild the city will bury the corpse of his sons in its foundation, and in the footings of the gates. This practice was probably a form of child sacrifice to pagan gods.

This prophecy is fulfilled 500 years later, when Hiel raises Jericho from ruins and verse 34 confirms his son was setup in its gates.

Chapter 17

People involved in the occult, talk about "entry points" or "gateways". Like a Ouija board, can actually hook an innocent person, and lead them into further, more sinister stimulation.

This was the effect the sin of Jeroboam had on folks in the northern kingdom. Jeroboam's golden cows conditioned Israel to accept Ahab's blasphemous worship.

But God has a man who will stand up to the wickedness of these leaders...

1 And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word."

This man named Elijah just unexpectedly springs onto the scene. Without introduction, he appears out of the biblical blue. All we're told of his pedigree or background is that he was a "Tishbite" - from Gilead, east of the Jordan.

"Tishbite" could refer to a family, or hometown - scholars aren't exactly sure.

The name "Elijah" is significant, it means "Yahweh is my God." Here was a man jealous for the true God. Elijah appears already at work, confronting King Ahab and notice, Elijah sees himself standing, not before Ahab, but before the LORD. He says in verse 1, "the LORD God of Israel... before whom I stand..."

Ahab possessed a wild, violent temper. He could order your execution as easily as a pizza from Dominos. This is why it took nerves of steel to confront this wicked king.

In Noah's day, God judged the world by flooding the earth over 40 days. Elijah tells Ahab, God will judge Israel by drying her up over 40 months. And note, Elijah tells the king there'll be no shortcuts

out of his dilemma. The road to repentance will pass through Elijah. The prophet tells king Ahab, it won't rain again, "except at My word..." Elijah was big and bold - one of the Bible's mightiest men of God.

This was a dramatic demonstration against the pagan god Baal, who was thought to be the sky god, the god of the weather. Elijah showed that through his prayers to the God of Israel, Yahweh was mightier than Baal.

2 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 3 "Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. God gave Elijah the hit-and-run sign. The prophet pronounces God's judgment - then God tells him to leave for safety's sake.

Sometimes God says to stand and fight-other times God says to flee

Wisemen-God told them to go home via different route.

Spies of Jericho-let down in a basket.

Paul-went back into Lystra after being stoned, showed incredible courage. 2 Corinthians 11 32 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

Point is, I don't think we can point the finger at scenarios and say once size fits all.

In Genesis, Joseph was rescued from prison
JTB was beheaded in prison

Peter and Silas worshipping in prison and doors of the prison were opened...

Verses 4-6

4 And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.”

5 So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook.

Here's the first instance of Uber eats or Grub hub-God had Elijah's food supernaturally delivered by ravens.

So Elijah is by the brook, where he has water, and ravens are delivering him food.

7 And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. Day by day, Elijah saw the flow of the brook slow down until it dried up. His source of water was gone.

THIS VERSE IS SO CRITICAL! This was the drought Elijah prayed for. He did not pray for rain to come again, even for his own survival. He kept the purpose of God first, even when it adversely affected him.

One of the most difficult things in life is sitting still, in the will of God, but especially when the brook dries up.

Some of you know what it's like by the drying brook of health, the diagnosis being all consuming.

The drying brook of money, slowly dwindling knowing there are very real financial needs that need to be met.

It can be a brutal thing to be led by God to a brook, only to have God then later dry up that brook.

It was FB Meyer who said?

“Why does God let them dry? He wants to teach us not to trust in His gifts but in Himself. He wants to drain us of self, as He drained the apostles by ten days of waiting before Pentecost. He wants to loosen our roots. He removes us to some other sphere of service and education. He wants to put in stronger contrast the river of water that never dries.”

8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 9 “Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.” Zarephath means “refining place.” Zarephath wasn’t in Israel, but in the hometown of Jezebel, the center of Baal worship.

On top of that, Widows were notorious for their poverty in the ancient world. God told Elijah to go to a Gentile widow and receive provision; it probably seemed to make more sense to wait beside a dry brook.

So here’s Elijah, going to the hometown of Jezebel, the center of Baal worship, outside of Israel, in Gentile country, to a woman’s home, a widow’s home, and there she was going to sustain him. Talk about refining!

10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, “Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink.” 11 And as she was going to get it PAUSE HERE

OK remember the scene-there's no rain. Water is scarce, and the widow encounters a stranger who asks water from her and she's willing to share!

...11 he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." This woman could've said. "It's hard enough for me to share water. But now you're asking me to give you bread on top of that?"

Have you experienced this? You give to somebody and think you're really doing something nice when, no sooner do you finish, than the person says, "Wait a minute, I want more..."

Water and food was scarce in that time. And yet she did something I would encourage us to learn from—in the time of her trouble, trial, and difficulty, she gave what she could to someone else.

That's always the secret of life. Getting our eyes off our own problems and being willing to help others who are struggling.

Luke 6:38, Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

12-15

12 So she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

13 And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. 14 For thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth.’ ”

15 So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. The widow believed, she stepped out in faith, and God blessed. Her needs were met.

The Lord will not be a debtor to anyone. If you are giving, sharing, sacrificing, He will never be in your debt. He'll more than make it up. **Matthew 6:33 “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”**

16 The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah. End of story right?

17-18

17 Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. 18 So she said to Elijah, “What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?” Even though the widow experienced a miracle, she was not insulated from further difficulties and problems. And in her frustration, she lashes out at Elijah.

19-21

19 And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. 20 Then he cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" 21 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." You gotta admit this is pretty weird. What if you walked into the funeral parlor, and saw a pastor inside the casket, stretched out on top of the corpse?

Let's finish the chapter...

22 Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.

23 And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!"

24 Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth." This is the first instance in the Bible of revival from death.

We look at Elijah and say wow-what faith! But you know what's interesting, is what the Bible has to say about him.

James 5:17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. Elijah was a man of prayer.