

4/3/11

1Kings 17-18

The northern Kingdom has gone from bad to worst, as they are now worshipping Baal and actively killing the prophets of God.

Ahab and Jezebel have saturated the land with this pagan religion of debauched sensual perversion and the people have embraced it.

17:1-24 The proclamation of judgment by Elijah to Ahab and God's concealment of Elijah.

17:1-7 The drought declared and flight to the Brook Cherth.

- 1) Elijah appears all of a sudden out of nowhere, being the prophet of God for the hour. vs. 1a
 - a) Elijah means "My father is Yahweh", appearing 60 times in 1-2 Kings, "Elijah the Tishbite" only 6 times. 1Kings 17:1; 21:17, 28; 2Kings 1:3, 8, 9:36
 - b) The name Tishbite "Tishbiy" means captivity and its location is uncertain.
- 2) He is also indicated to be of the inhabitants of Gilead. vs. 1b

- a) The word rendered "inhabitants", is in the original is the same as that rendered "Tishbite", so the verse may be read as in the LXX, "Elijah the Tishbite of Tishbi in Gilead". (Easton)
 - b) Some interpret this word to mean "stranger or sojourner" and read the verse, "Elijah the stranger from among the strangers in Gilead".
 - c) This designation is believed to denote Tishi to be his birthplace, a place in Upper Galilee (mentioned in the apocryphal book of Tobit), from which for some reason he migrated into Gilead. (Easton)
- b.** The region of Gilead remember belonged partly to the Reubenites and Gadites, and partly to the half-tribe of Manasseh on the east side of the Jordan, where this prophet dwelt.
* They were the first to go into captivity into Assyria!
- 3) The prophet Elijah proclaimed the judgment of God directly to Ahab, probably at Samaria. vs. 1c-g
 - a) The authority behind the proclamation was the God of Israel. vs. 1d
 - b) The truthfulness of the message was indicated by the phrase, "before whom I stand". vs. 1e

- c) The nature of the judgment was against to god Baal, “There shall not be dew nor rain these years.” vs. 1f
* Baal was the Phoenician god of the storm, believed to control the rain.
 - d) The introduction of Baal worship by Ahab and Jezebel had permeated the country.
 - e) The agent for the duration of the prophecy would be the prophet Elijah, “except at my word.” vs. 1g
* The blessing and cursings. Lev. 26, Deut. 27-28
- 4) The word of the Lord came to Elijah. vs. 2
- a. The phrase is common throughout the Scriptures for the revelation of God to an individual.
 - b. Six time is appears in the chapter. vs. 1, 2, 5, 8, 16, 24
- 5) The prophet Elijah was given his next instructions. vs. 3
- a) The direction confirmed Elijah was in Samaria, having declared the prophetic judgment to Ahab.
 - b) Samaria, the capital of Ahab.
 - c) The word “cathar”, means in order to conceal himself, carefully is the idea.
 - d) The Brook Cherith was about 5 miles north, from the north end of the Dead Sea, 15 or so miles the city of Jericho.

- e) The prophet was to hide by the Brook which flowed into the Jordan River.
- 6) The prophet was told by God that He would provide for him during drought. vs. 4
- a) Elijah would drink from the brook. vs. 4a
 - b) Elijah would be fed by the ravens. vs. 4b
* God said, “I have commanded the ravens”.
- 17:5-7** The obedience of Elijah in faith.
- 1) Elijah did according to the word of the Lord, to the exact place. vs. 5
- a) Believed and trusted God to provide for him and conceal him from Ahab, during this most difficult time.
 - b) He did not lean to his own understanding. Prov. 3:5-7
- 2) Elijah witnessed the faithfulness and power of God to provide the very way He told him. vs. 6
- a) By the super-natural act of the ravens. vs. 6a-b
 - b) By the natural through the Cherith Book. vs. 6c
- 3) Elijah was tested through faith when the brook dried up, due tot he rain. vs. 7
- a) Elijah trusted God though things began to look grim.

- b) Elijah waited till God spoke to him again, he was under training.
- c) Elijah was alone and cut off from all men, dependent on God alone.

17:8-16 The prophet Elijah was sent by God to a widow at Zarephath.

- 1) The voice of the Lord came right on time and redirected him. vs. 8-9
 - a) God was right on time to continue Elijah's training. vs. 8
 - 1) Elijah was learning to discern the voice of God, Yahweh.
 - b) God knew the safest place for Elijah was Jezebel's backyard. vs. 9
 - 1) Zarephath was 6 miles south of Sidon, situated between Tyre and Sidon, in modern day Lebanon.
 - 2) The pagan area of Phoenicia god Baal, 115 miles north by a crow's flight, on the shores of the Mediterranean.
 - c) He was to dwell there, for God would now provide for him through a widow He had commanded, as the ravens.
- 2) The prophet Elijah once again went in full obedience to Zarephath. vs. 10-12
 - a) The arrival brought Elijah in contact with the very widow gathering sticks and asked for drink and bread. vs. 10-11

- b) The response of the widow revealed her condition was most pitiful and a seeming contradiction to the words God had declared to Elijah. vs. 12
 - 1) The widow declared her destitute poverty, having a little flour and oil, then would starve to death. The truthfulness of her statement by declaring, "As the LORD your God lives," vs. 12a-b
 - a) Her oath was by the God of Elijah, not that she knew God.
 - b) The drought had already taken its toll, there was famine on the land!
- 3) The prophet Elijah was to awaken faith in the widow to bring about the word God had promised. vs. 13-16
 - a) He encouraged her compassionately to not fear, but do as he said. vs. 13
 - b) He promised her God would provide for her till rain came, revealing God to the woman and her son, maturing Elijah's faith for Carmel. vs. 14
 - * Jesus and the Syro-Phoenician women. Matt. 15:21-28
 - c) He saw her obedience in faith and witnessed God to be true to His word. vs. 15-16

- 1) The widow saw with her own eyes the flour and oil reproduce itself. obey.
- 2) This was also a sharp rebuke to the people of God, for the extent of unbelief and apostasy in Israel, Jesus declared it in the synagogue at Nazareth, as he was sent to a Gentile. Lk. 4:25-26
* Faith was not found in Israel!

17:17-24 The widow accused Elijah for the death of her son.

- 1) The son of the widow became severely sick and died, no breath was left in him. vs. 17
* The time must have been somewhere about the second, possibly the third years of drought, since the next chapter opens up in the third year, six months later it rained. 1Kings. 18:1
- 2) The widow charged Elijah with visiting punishment on her for her past sins. vs. 18
 - a) Recognizing her sinfulness and relating the death of her son to her sins of the past.
 - b) Guilt will do that, due to un-confessed sin.

- 3) The prophet being as shocked as the widow took the child and laid him on his own bed. vs. 19
* Elijah resorted to his training, to go to God.
- 4) The prophet Elijah revealed his humanity by his word to God, yet completely depend upon God. vs. 20
 - a) The cry is one of helplessness desperation!
 - b) Regardless of who we are, when our emotions run high or low, they affect our perspective.
- 4) The prophet Elijah stepped out in faith and the child revived. vs. 21-22
 - a) He laid on top of the child, three times. vs. 21
* Elisha and Paul did the same. 2Kings 4:34, Acts 20:10
 - b) He saw God answer his prayer, the child revived. vs. 22
- 5) The prophet Elijah presented the revived son to the widow u pretentious. vs. 23
 - a) The training of Elijah's faith at the beginning had been the foundation for this test.
 - b) The training of Elijah's faith had grown and would continue to grow.
 - c) Elijah knew he was the mere instrument and wanted her to look to God.

* 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.” Ja. 5:17

- 6) The woman proclaimed her faith in God. vs. 24
- a) She acknowledged the instrument,, as a man of God. vs. 24a-b
- 1)) Too often people have a difficult time distinguishing the work of God from the man God uses, resulting in man worship!
 - 2)) At other times men forget, they are mere instruments being used, not the one bringing about the results.
- b) She acknowledged her faith in God’s word to be the truth. vs. 24c
- 1)) She went from saying, “your God”, to acknowledging Elijah was a man of God and the word of Yahweh to be the true. vs. 12, 20, 24
 - 2)) As God was judging the idolatrous pagans, He was at the same time reaching out to those with an open heart, as He does in every generation!

18:1-46 **The prophet Elijah reveals himself to Ahab.**

18:1-16 *The prophet Elijah encountered the man Obadiah.*

18:1-2 The commanded for Elijah to go to Ahab.

- 1) The word of Yahweh came to Elijah again in the third year, close to the six month deadline. vs. 1a-c
- 2) Elijah was to present himself to Ahab, God was about to send rain. vs. 1d-g
- 3) Elijah obey, as Samaria had been greatly impacted by the famine. vs. 2

18:3-16 *The man Obadiah runs into Elijah, as he searched for water.*

- 1) Obadiah fear Yahweh, though he was over the house of Ahab, who petitioned him. vs. 3
- 2) Obadiah had protected 100 prophets of God, 50 in each cave, at the time Jezebel massacred them in the land and fed them with bread and water. vs. 4
- 3) Ahab sent Obadiah to go search for water and grass for the horses, due to the drought of three years. each went in a different direction . vs. 5-6
- 4) Obadiah ran into Elijah suddenly. vs. 7-8

- a) Recognizing him, and fell on his face, declaring, “Is that you, my lord Elijah?” vs. 7
- b) Elijah said, “It is I. Go, tell your master, ‘Elijah is here.’” vs. 8
- 5) Obadiah feared for his life. vs. 9-14
 - a) He expressed he would be put to death by Ahab. vs. 9
 - b) All were looking for Elijah, everywhere, with no success. vs. 10
 - c) He feared when he told Ahab, Elijah would disappear and he would be put to death, yet he had feared God from youth. vs. 11-12
 - d) He asked if he had heard of his rescue of the 100 prophets from Jezebel. vs. 13
 - e) He expressed his genuine fear for his life, vs. 14
- 6) Elijah assured Obadiah he would not disappear. vs. 15-16
 - a) Elijah swore by the Captain of the armies of heaven, the LORD of hosts lives, before whom he stand, that he would present myself to Ahab that day. vs. 15
 - b) Obadiah went and told Ahab, and he met with Elijah. vs. 16

18:17-40 *The prophet Elijah confronts Ahab and challenges the prophets of Baal.*

18:17-19 The face to face meeting of Ahab and Elijah.

- 1) The evil arrogant response of Ahab. vs. 17
 - a) The word troubler “akar” means the one to stir up and disturb or hexed the land.
 - b) Israel, meaning the northern kingdom.
- 2) Elijah charges Ahab for the trouble in the kingdom. vs. 18
 - a) He and his fathers house.
 - b) For forsaking Yahweh and following the Baals.
- 3) Elijah commanded Ahab to gather the false prophets that ate at Jezebel’s table to Mount Carmel. vs. 19
 - a) 450 prophets of Baal.
 - b) 400 prophets of Asherah “the groves” the Canaanite goddess of fertility.

18:20-24 The prophet Elijah confronted the people.

- 1) Ahab gathered the people of Israel and the false prophets on Mount Carmel, close to the modern day city of Hifa, about 1800 feet above sea level, about 40 miles from Samaria. vs. 20
 - * Carmel “Karmel”, means “garden land”, Megiddo in the plain below.

- 2) Elijah rebuked the people for their compromise and indecisiveness, to their own shame. vs. 21
 - a) The people were being indifferent about the worship of Yahweh.
 - b) The people were being syncretistic in their worship of Baal and ascribing it to the worship of Yahweh. Josh. 24:15
- 3) Elijah said he was one against the 450 prophets of Baal. vs. 22
- 4) Elijah laid out the specifics for his challenge of the prophets of Baal and the people agreed. vs. 23-24

18:25-29 The prophet Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal.

- 1) Elijah gave them their instructions. vs. 25
- 2) The prophets of Baal petitioned Baal from morning to noon, jumping around the altar, without hearing a peep from Baal. vs. 26
- 3) Elijah mocked them at noon, revealing Baal was no god. vs. 27
 - a) They believed that Baal in the summer time when the country became dry was asleep or confined to the underworld.
 - b) Then in Oct.- Nov. he would be active again.

- 4) They cried louder and build themselves up to a frenzy, cutting themselves, blood was everywhere. vs. 28
- 5) Time passed till the evening sacrifice, but no answer came from Baal. vs.29

18:30-40 The prophet Elijah demonstrated Yahweh to be God.

- 1) Elijah called the people to him and they repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down, due to the persecution and massacre of those who worshipped God. vs. 30
- 2) Elijah took twelve stones for the altar, representing the twelve tribes of the sons of Jacob and Who said to Jacob, “Israel shall be your name. vs. 31
- 3) He made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed, place the wood and sacrifice in pieces, pouring 4 water pots of water on it. vs. 32-33
- 4) He had them pour water a second and third time, so that the entire trench and altar were full of water. vs. 34-35
- 5) Elijah at time of the evening offering declared ? things. vs. 36-37
 - a) He made his appeal to the “LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel.
 - b) He asked God to reveal he was God in Israel and He his servant, doing all according to His word. vs. 36

- c) He asked that God hear him, for the people know He was the LORD God, calling their hearts back to Him. vs. 37
- 6) Yahweh answered by fire and consumed the entire sacrifice and altar. vs. 38
- 7) All the people saw it, fell on their faces, declaring, “The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!” vs. 39
- 8) Elijah commanded to seize and kill the prophets of Baal and they executed them down at the Brook Kishon. vs. 40

18:41-46 *The prophet Elijah declared to Ahab it would rain.*

- 1) Elijah told Ahab to go eat and drink, indicating that it was about to rain. vs. 41
- 2) Ahab did so went up to the top of Carmel, bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees. vs. 42
- 3) Elijah asked his servant to look to the sea, but saw nothing, after the 7th time he saw a small cloud and told Ahab to go before the rain would impede him, vs. 43-44
- 4) The sky became black with clouds and wind, heavy rain came and Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. vs. 45
- 5) The hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran super-naturally ahead of Ahab to the

entrance of Jezreel, about 15 miles. vs. 46