

Startled by Grace Part 5: "Daily Grace" (5-6-2018)

New Series: "Startled by Grace . . . Waking up to the very Good News! The same Gospel that saves you is the Gospel that sustains you. We should wake up to this good news today and everyday!"

Rest of the Series: Stories of Grace (Testimonies in our church and stories from Scripture)

Today: Story of Elijah, the drought, and the widow and her son . . .

Setting the Scene

- **Ahab** (king of Israel) married to **Jezebel** (daughter of the king of Sidon) . . .

1 Kings 16:33 (ESV)

Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

- **Elijah** – the prophet whose name means: "The Lord (Yahweh) is my God"
- **Widow & her son** (From Zarephath a town in Sidon)

The Story

Elijah shows up and tells King Ahab . . .

1 Kings 17:1b (ESV)

"As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."

God tells Elijah to go live by a brook . . .

1 Kings 17:6 (ESV)

And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

Notes: God provides Daily Grace

The brook dries up . . .

1 Kings 17:7-9 (ESV)

(7) And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. (8) Then the word of the LORD came to him, (9) "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to feed you."

Notes: The brook dries up and God tells him to move on . . . to Jezebel's country! And ask a widow (during a drought) to feed him!

Elijah meets the widow . . .

1 Kings 17:10-12 (ESV)

(10) So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." (11) And as she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." (12) And she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now 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."

Notes: Grace comes to the desolate place, to the outsider, to the desperate

An invitation for Grace . . .

1 Kings 17:13-14 (ESV)

(13) And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said. But first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. (14) For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.'"

Notes: Elijah's invitation of Grace offers Hope, but it requires Faith

A Step of Faith leads to Daily Grace . . .

1 Kings 17:15-16 (ESV)

(15) And she went and did as Elijah said. And she and he and her household ate for many days. (16) The jar of flour was not spent, neither did the jug of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

Notes: How do I know she had faith? She went & did as Elijah said!

- Because of the Boldness & Audacity of Elijah
- And because of the courage & faith of the Widow
- 3 people ate everyday instead of just Elijah.

Tragedy and a Resurrection . . .

1 Kings 17:17-18 (ESV)

(17) After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill. And his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. (18) And she said to Elijah, "What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to cause the death of my son!"

Notes: Tragedy strikes and I blame myself, others, and God . . . (Maybe tell Abby's birth story here)

Elijah prays a real prayer . . .

1 Kings 17:19-21 (ESV)

(19) And he said to her, "Give me your son." And he took him from her arms and carried him up into the upper chamber where he lodged, and laid him on his own bed. (20) And he cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by killing her son?" (21) Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life come into him again."

Notes: Living by Grace isn't about putting on a happy face . . . it's about living daily & honestly before God, praying real prayers.

Jesus wasn't singing, "Joy to the World" on the cross . . .

Matthew 27:46 (ESV)

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

He was quoting Psalm 22 . . .

Psalm 22 (The cry of David, the human condition, and ultimately the words of Jesus on the cross)

Psalms 22:1-2 (ESV)

(1) My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? (2) O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.

Psalms 22:23-24 (ESV)

(23) You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! (24) For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.

Psalms 22:26-27 (ESV)

(26) The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD! May your hearts live forever! (27) All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

God hears Elijah . . .

1 Kings 17:22-24 (ESV)

(22) And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. (23) And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper chamber into the house and delivered him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives." (24) And the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth."

Conclusion: We see this over and over again, in the Scripture & in life, Grace does not exempt us from trouble, but it is available in the midst of it. Offering daily help, and eternal hope!