



## ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

**1 Kings 17:7-16** Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. <sup>8</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to him: <sup>9</sup> “Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food.” <sup>10</sup> 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?” <sup>11</sup> As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.” <sup>12</sup> “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 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.”

<sup>13</sup> Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. <sup>14</sup> 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 gives rain on the land.’” <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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.

- 1.) Zarephath was a 55-mile walk from the Kerith Ravine. Such a journey gives a person time to think, in this case, about the God he served. Our culture doesn't easily give us time to reflect on God. Identify things in our lives that work against time to meditate. What can you do to make time to think about your God and your relationship with him.
- 2.) Given the location of Zarephath, what would have been surprising to Elijah about the Lord's command?
- 3.) Imagine you are the widow. What thoughts and emotions would Elijah's request have worked in you? What was God's purpose in bringing these words from her heart?

4.) Reflect on the times in life when you have given up all hope in yourself and your situation. What is the devil's desire in such desperate times? What is God's goal?

**Job 2:4-5** "Skin for skin!" Satan replied. "A man will give all he has for his own life. <sup>5</sup> But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face."

**Zechariah 13:9** "This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is our God.' "

**1 Peter 1:6-7** In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>7</sup> These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

**2 Corinthians 12:9** [The Lord] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

5.) How did Elijah's promise and the widow's response embody the essence of faith?

**Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

**James 2:14-18** What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? <sup>15</sup> Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. <sup>16</sup> If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. <sup>18</sup> But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

6.) Why can we take the promises of God's Word to the bank, no matter how unlikely or extraordinary?

**1 Kings 17:16** 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.

**Joshua 12:14-15** "Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed."

**Luke 1:37** "For nothing is impossible with God." (ὅτι οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πᾶν ἀνθρώπος)

**2 Timothy 2:13** He will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

7.) Share an example from your experience where God has supplied you or someone you know with blessings or help in ways that are totally unexpected, or where someone you know has had to trust in the Lord like the widow did.

## ELIJAH RAISES THE WIDOW'S SON

**1 Kings 17:17-24** Some time later the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. He grew worse and worse, and finally stopped breathing. <sup>18</sup> She said to Elijah, “What do you have against me, man of God? Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?”

<sup>19</sup> “Give me your son,” Elijah replied. He took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his bed. <sup>20</sup> Then he cried out to the LORD, “O LORD my God, have you brought tragedy also upon this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?” <sup>21</sup> Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried to the LORD, “O LORD my God, let this boy’s life return to him!”

<sup>22</sup> The LORD heard Elijah’s cry, and the boy’s life returned to him, and he lived. <sup>23</sup> Elijah picked up the child and carried him down from the room into the house. He gave him to his mother and said, “Look, your son is alive!” <sup>24</sup> Then the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is the truth.”

1.) What are the different ways people respond to tragedy?

2.) To what truths and promises of Scripture can we cling in tragedy?

**1 John 1:5b** God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

**1 John 4:8b** God is love.

**Ephesians 1:20-22** [God] raised [Christ] from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.

**Romans 8:28** We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

**Romans 8:38-39** I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3.) What can we learn about prayer from Elijah's prayer?

4.) This is the first bodily resurrection recorded in Scripture. God gives us concrete evidence that he is the Lord of life and death. How does this truth culminate in the ministry and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

**PRAYER**