**ELIJAH, A SERVANT OF GOD’S WORD**

1 Kings 17:1-24

Key verses 24

“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.””

**Introduction**

 God could have given up the northern kingdom, Israel. But he did not. He sent His servant, Elijah out of blue. It indicates that God never fails to show his mercy and love for his people. May the Lord help us to have faith in God and continue to obey Him for His glory like Elijah. We are like him but we have power in and through prayer and obedience to serve America and all nations. Amen.

1. Read verses 1-6. What did Elijah say to Ahab? (1, James 5:17-18) What was the word of the Lord to Elijah? (2-4) What can we learn from the Lord and Elijah? (5-6)

1-1, Read verses 1-6.

 Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2017&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9319a)] 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.” 2 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: 3 “Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. 4 You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there.” 5 So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

1-2, What did Elijah say to Ahab? (1, James 5:17-18)

 ***Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe[***[***a***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2017&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9319a)***] 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.”***

* Out of clear blue, Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead appeared in verse 1.

It is described in his geographic origin instead of ancestry. It is located at the east side of the Jordan river.

* He might be a gentile. But what really counts is that he was a person who served the Lord God, the God of Israel. He believed, “God lives.”
* He went to Ahab directly like the prophet Ahijah who went to Jeroboam directly. “There will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.”
* *“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.” (James 5)*
* According to James, he was a man of prayer who prayed earnestly and God answered his prayer accordingly.
* “Elijah” means, “Yahweh is my God.” While Ahab and all the people in his kingdom worship idols, Elijah served the living and true God.
* It was a crucial time in the history of Israel. It looked as if the worship of the true God might be completely eliminated in the northern kingdom.
* Later God pointed out that there are still 7000 remnants in Israel. But they were paralysed with fear and kept quiet.
* 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!!
* Where did his strength stem from? It came from the Lord God of Israel who lives. Everyone thought that God was dead. God was the supreme reality of his life*.*
* He stood in the presence of Ahab, but he was conscious of the presence of someone greater than any earthly king no matter what.

1-3, What was the word of the Lord to Elijah? (2-4)

 ***2 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: 3 “Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. 4 You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there.”***

1-4, What can we learn from the Lord and Elijah? (5-6)

 ***5 So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.***

* Elijah was in great danger because of the word of God. Then God sent him eastward and hid him in the Kerith Ravine.
* God led him one step at a time. He did not tell him to go there until he first delivered his message to the king. Then he followed God by trusting Him only.
* He served God’s word very powerfully before the king Ahab. It must have been a spectacular thing in front of the people. But he had to hide himself according to God’s word. He will be fed by an unclean animal.
* During the drought, he should rely on God and a raven to feed him. It must have been a humiliating thing for him to obey. But he obeyed and got trained humbly.

### Read verses 7-14. What did the Lord direct Elijah to do when the brook dried up? (7-9) What did he do according to the Lord’s command? (10-11) What can we learn from what Elijah requested to a widow despite her situation? (12-14)

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### 2-1, Read verses 7-14.

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.’”

### 2-2, What did the Lord direct Elijah to do when the brook dried up? (7-9)

***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.”***

### “Some time later the brook dried up.” God wants to teach him not to trust in something else including the crook but in God, Himself.

### 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.

### Then God directed him to go to a gentile place where a widow would be his helper. It was an unusual and very challenging move for him to obey.

### We remember that this Sidonian place was Jezebel’s hometown. God might have wanted him to overcome any enemy with the obedient spirit and faith.

* Widows were notorious for their poverty in the ancient world. God told him to go to a widow to get food. What nonsense it sounded to him!
* When He was rejected by His own people, Jesus used this example of Elijah’s coming to the widow of Zarephath as an illustration of God’s right to choose a people to Himself: Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.” ([Luke 4:24-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/luke/4/24-26/s_977024))
* From God’s point of view, this woman was a woman of faith and humility who was ready to trust and obey God despite her poor status.

### 2-3, What did he do according to the Lord’s command? (10-11)

***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.”***

* Indeed this woman was a poor woman gathering sticks. Elijah might have thought that God made mistakes, but indeed God led him to a poor Gentile widow.
* So he obeyed God and called to her and asked. Simply, he obeyed the word of God regardless of the odd situation.

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### 2-4, What can we learn from what Elijah requested to a widow despite her situation? (12-14)

***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.’”***

* “As surely as the Lord your God lives” indicates that she was a woman of faith. Her poor condition was very serious and she planned to die after the possibly last meal for her and her son.
* “Don’t be afraid” was God’s 1st word to her through Elijah. God wanted her to put away ear and replace it with trust and obey in God.
* He asked this destitute widow to give him something from her last bit of food. This seemed like the worst kind of asking.
* But he could do it because God told(promised) him that He would provide a never-ending supply of food for the widow, her son, and Elijah himself. He asked the widow to put her trust in this great promise of God.
* “Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well.” Trust God first and we will taste His absolute provision! Amen!
1. Read verses 15-24. What might the woman have experienced as she obeyed? (15-16) What happened to her son? (17) Describe how Elijah raised her son. (18-24) What can we learn from this passage?

3-1, Read verses 15-24.

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.

17 Some time later the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. He grew worse and worse, and finally stopped breathing. 18 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?”

19 “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. 20 Then he cried out to the Lord, “Lord my God, have you brought tragedy even on this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?” 21 Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried out to the Lord, “Lord my God, let this boy’s life return to him!”

22 The Lord heard Elijah’s cry, and the boy’s life returned to him, and he lived. 23 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!”

24 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.”

3-2, What might the woman have experienced as she obeyed? (15-16)

***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.***

* The widow actually obeyed it by trusting God and His promise through His servant Elijah, despite great risk involved.
* She and he(Elijah) and her household ate for many days. In this way, God fulfilled the promise to the widow, her son, and Elijah. God used her as a channel of supply(blessing) and her needs were met as a result.

3-3, What happened to her son? (17)

***17 Some time later the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. He grew worse and worse, and finally stopped breathing.***

* They must have been very happy with God’s faithfulness in keeping His promise. But her son died from a similar disease like Covid 19 infection to stop breathing.
* The death of the son was a real blow to the widow. Not only did she suffer as any mother who loses a child, but she also suffered as one who lost her only hope for the future. We obeyed for a while until we drew a line due to our children.
* The expectation was that her son would grow and provide for her in her old age. Now that expectation is gone!

3-4, Describe how Elijah raised her son. (18-24)

***18 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?” 19 “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. 20 Then he cried out to the Lord, “Lord my God, have you brought tragedy even on this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?” 21 Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried out to the Lord, “Lord my God, let this boy’s life return to him!” 22 The Lord heard Elijah’s cry, and the boy’s life returned to him, and he lived. 23 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!” 24 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.”***

* At the death of her son, the widow indirectly blamed Elijah. She more directly blamed herself and her sins.
* Elijah prayed with great heart and intimacy with God. He brought this seemingly unexplainable tragedy to God in prayer. Since he knew God led him to this widow, Elijah laid this thing on God and asked Him to take care of this matter.
* He cried out to the Lord who lives! He stretched himself out on the boy three times. Then the Lord God listened to his prayer and made the boy alive.
* This was an unusual prayer method but it shows us how earnest and creative and passionate Elijah prayed to the Lord.
* When we obey and trust God and His words, at a critical time we can go to God and earnestly pray for what seems impossible until God may answer our prayers.
* Although it is not based on our own good things, still God is pleased with our obedience and absolute trust in Him and is willing to hear our prayer!

3-5, What can we learn from this passage?

**Conclusion**

 This passage helps us to trust and obey God first. Elijah obeyed and trusted in the Lord His God who lives. He delivered the message to Ahab without fear. He obeyed one step at a time. He went to hide himself at the brook. Then he was asked to go to a widow in a gentile land. But he obeyed and challenged a poor widow. In human terms it did not make sense. But still he trusted and obeyed the Lord absolutely. We must live by the absolute resurrection faith, not by human reason. Romans 1:4-5 reads, “and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. 5 Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name’s sake.” We are to live by resurrection faith and absolute obedience to display God’s absolute power and authority. We are blessed to be a holy instrument to reveal the true and almighty God in this spiritually drought land. Amen. **One word: Bring me first the bread!**