

Are You There? Part 2

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[0 : 0 0] tonight and go to 1st Kings chapter 17. One of these days I'll leave there. 1st Kings chapter 17. Last week we were talking about, are you there?

And the there was, are you in the center of where God wants you? Are you there? Where God has a plan and a place for you to function and to do His will.

We were talking about Ahab chapter 17 beginning in verse 1. He goes and he tells Ahab and Jezebel it's not going to rain anymore. From there God sends him to the brook Cherith.

And from there he sends him to Zarephath. And God takes care of him in those different places when he's away from Ahab and Jezebel.

He goes to Cherith and I told you first of all Cherith means to cut down or to cut off. He went to Cherith to be cut off from Ahab and Jezebel.

[1 : 1 3] So he'd be away from them, hidden away where God could take care of him and they could not get to him. He winds up in Zarephath. And we talked about that, how incredible that was that God sent him there because that is where Jezebel is from.

So he's hiding out in Jezebel's backyard. You know, who's going to look for the guy that you're looking for? Who's going to think that he's going to your hometown to hide out?

But that's where God sent him. And we talked about the importance of him being there in those different places. The importance of God watching over him and taking care of him by him being there.

And we're talking about, are you there where God wants you to be? We talked about the fact that Noah was there on the ark. We talked about the three Hebrew children were there in the fiery furnace.

God could take care of them in the fiery furnace. We talked about the fact that Paul was there in a prison cell. Jesus was there on a cross. All of those places are right where they were supposed to be, where God had them, and God had them in the center of his hand and his will.

[2 : 3 2] So the question is, are you there? And why is that so important? Well, first of all, we said there is a place of promise. Look at verses 4.

Verse 4 with me, chapter 17. And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

Look at verse 9. Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

We talked about God gave promises to Elijah. He said, you go to the brook Cherith. You go to Zarephath. There, things are going to be provided for you. You are going to be taken care of.

First Kings chapter 17. If you're not there already, this is where I am. And we talked about the fact that in Romans chapter 4, verse 21, it says, and being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

- [3 : 34] God promised, Elijah, you go to Cherith. Elijah, you go to Zarephath. And I will take care of you there.
- I will meet the needs that you have there. We use Psalm 138 too. I will worship toward thy holy temple and praise thy name for thy loving kindness and for thy truth.
- For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. We know how exalted the name of God is. We know how exalted the name of Jesus is. And he says he puts his word above that.
- God is going to keep his word to us. He is going to take care of us. Matter of fact, we talked about Ephesians 3, 20, where it talks about he's going to do exceedingly abundantly above. All that we ask or think.
- Second thing we talked about, there is a place of provision. The ravens were going to fly to the brook Cherith and they were going to bring food to him morning and evening.
- [4 : 34] They were going to be there with the food that he needed. You think about God is suspending the laws of nature to take care of Elijah.
- Those ravens, their nature is to eat everything they find and keep it for themselves. They're flying in morning and evening. Here you go, Elijah.
- Here's your food for the day. And he's got the water of the brook there ready to be taken for him to have to drink. Then in verse 9, when he goes to Zarephath, same thing.
- You know the story. He goes to this widow woman and he is there and he tells her to make him something to eat. And she says, well, I'm going to be, you know, I was getting ready to make this stuff.
- And I have just this little bit of meal. I have this little bit of oil and I'm going to make things and we're all going to die. And he says, you make something, include me in it and see what happens.
- [5 : 37] And from then on, every day when she went, the meal was in the barrel. The oil was in the cruise that she had. And she was able to day after day after day, she kept on cooking.
- Even though she had just this little bit and just this little bit, it was always there every day. God took care of what they needed. And we talked about the fact that we read from Matthew chapter 6 about how God supplies the fields.
- He supplies the animals, the birds. He supplies everything that we need. Verse 33 says, but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.
- You follow him. You do what he wants. You be in the center of his will. You will get what you want. Philippians 4, 19. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches and glory. Now, let's have a word of prayer and I'll give you the rest of this.
- Dear Heavenly Father, I just thank you for the fact that you do take care of us. You watch over us. You meet our needs. Lord, we just will keep ourselves in the center of your will. Keep ourselves in the center of your hand.
- [6 : 45] Lord, allow you to work. And we will follow you wherever you take us. We will be ready to go. And Lord, we can watch what you do and how you meet needs.
- Lord, help us to trust you. I know I've been mentioning that a lot lately. But Lord, help us to trust you. Help us to have the confidence that my God shall supply all my needs.
- Lord, thank you for the way you take care of us. In Jesus' name, amen. Number three, there is a place of providence. There is a place of providence. When Elijah arrived there at Cherith and at Zarephath, notice what it says in these verses.

Elijah is going to have a need when he gets there. Look at what verse 4 says again. And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

Look again at verse 9. Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

[7 : 56] Elijah is going to need things. If he's going to follow God's will and do what God has for him, he's going to go to these places. And when he gets there, he's going to have needs. And you notice what God says, I have commanded.

Before Elijah ever got there, the need was already going to be covered. Before he ever got to the place where God wanted him to be, God was already explaining.

It reminds me, I wish I could have found it. I couldn't find it, but I remember one sermon I gave years ago. It told about a missionary in Africa.

And she was helping with a lady. And she was going to be giving birth. And she gave birth. But there was something that they needed to be able to keep the baby warm for something or other.

I don't remember the whole story. Huh? Yeah, she needed a hot water bottle. It's what she needed. To be able to put hot water in and help this baby to stay warm and stuff. And this little baby that had just been born had a little older sister.

[9 : 01] And the missionary even prayed that the older sister would have a doll or a stuffed animal or something to play with. Because all attention was going to this baby because it was in need.

And so she prayed for something for this older sister as well. That very day, a box came from England. And inside, when they opened up the box, hot water bottle, stuffed animal.

The box had been mailed from England six months before. But God knew they were going to need those things on that day. See, God's provision, God's providence of taking care of us.

You know, your tomorrow is his right now. You're looking, I've got to have this. I've got to have this. I've got to have this. God says, they're going to need that over there.

So let's put it in place here and get it over there so they're ready for it. So it's ready when they get there. When they get to the brook Cherith, when he gets to Zarephath, the things are going to be ready that he needs.

[10 : 08] See, God's watching out. God's taking care of. There's never a day when God goes, I didn't see that coming. He's always ready.

He already knows what we have need of. You think of the people you read through about in the Bible. You know, the three Hebrew children, Daniel, Lazarus.

God knew what they were going to need when they were at the point where they needed it, and he was ready for them. Number four, there is a place of power.

There is a place of power. Again, when he's in Zarephath, look at verses 15 and 16. Verse 15 says, Meals there every day.

Oil's there every day. God is supplying. And even more, look at verse 22. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

[11 : 29] This is a place of power. When we're in the center of God's will, doing what he wants us to do, following him, we're going to see awesome displays of his power. See, when you get there to the center of his will, and you stay there, you're in a position to watch what he's going to do and how he's going to meet needs.

You know, so many Christians won't follow God, won't do what God wants them to do. And then they complain about, you know, I never see God do anything.

Get in the middle of his will. Follow what he has for you. Remember what it said, Matthew chapter 28, verse 18, leading into the Great Commission.

He has all power. Job 42, 2. I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

God can do anything. And everything that we even know or think about, he knows. And he will take care of us. Luke chapter 2, verse 37. For with God, nothing shall be impossible.

[12 : 43] Somebody likes that song a lot. Right? Didn't get picked tonight, but she likes that song. With God, nothing shall be impossible. God can take care of us.

You know, there can be a frightening place sometimes. Being in the center of God's will can be a frightening place. Being in the center of God's will can have some apprehension and things that go along with it.

But he says, look, you don't think you can handle being there. That's okay. You don't have to. I will. I have the power.

I have the provision. I have the promises I'm giving to you. I will handle it. You don't have to worry about it. Number five.

There is a place of protection. A place of protection. This time, look at verse 3. There in chapter 17. He says, get thee hence and turn thee eastward and hide thyself by the brook Cherith that is before Jordan.

[13 : 49] Hide thyself there by the brook Cherith. What was so important about him being there?

Well, like I said, the ravens took care of him. The water was going to be there until the water ran out. Then he moved him to Zarephath. Why was it so important that he went to these places?

God was providing. God was protecting. God was taking care of him. Look at chapter 18 and look at verses 10 and 11. Chapter 18, verses 10 and 11.

As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom whether my Lord hath not sent to seek thee. And when they said he is not there, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation that they found thee not.

Stop there for a second. Ahab has been looking for Elijah everywhere. He has gone to the nearby kingdoms. He has gone everywhere around Israel looking for Elijah because he wanted to have some words with him and probably wanted to kill him.

[14 : 56] He could not find him. Nobody knew where he was because God's protecting him in these two places that he had for him. Verse 11 says, And now thou sayest, go tell thy Lord, behold, Elijah is here.

Elijah is ready to meet with him again. Now it's the time. It's on Elijah's terms. Ahab's looked everywhere. Now Elijah says, go tell Ahab I'm over here.

He's been looking and looking. He couldn't find me. God's watching out for me. God's taking care of me. The safest place you can be in your life is in the middle of God's will. God's going to take care of you.

God's going to meet the need that you have. Psalm 23, verses 4 and 5. You know them well. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

For thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil. My cup runneth over.

[15 : 58] Elijah's a good example of that. He's in Zarephath, Jezebel's backyard. I prepare a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. That's exactly what was going on with Elijah.

God's watching out for him and taking care of him. You know, but so many people refuse to trust the Lord. They feel that he's out to hurt them or he's not going to look after them.

He's not going to take care of them. Truth is, you're better in the middle of his will than you are trying to do anything on your own. Just trust him. Number six.

There is a place of privilege. There is a place of privilege. Elijah learned more about God by being in these places than most people would ever learn.

See, being there was hard. Being there was difficult. But he got to see God do some extraordinary things by being in the middle of God's will.

[17 : 04] Ravens delivering food. Meal and oil just keep resupplying and resupplying and resupplying and resupplying for weeks and months at a time.

Just always going to be there. A child who had died being raised from the dead. Can you imagine? Be in the middle of God's will.

Be there. And watch what God is going to do. How he's going to take care of you. Think of some of the other examples in the Bible. Mary and Martha.

They were doing what they thought God wanted them to do. And their brother dies. And Jesus shows up. And they get their brother back. Think about Moses.

I don't want to lead these people. I don't. These people are not going to listen to me. You know. God says, I want you to lead them, Moses.

[18 : 06] I want you to be right there. Trust me. Watch the provision. Watch the privilege. Watch the protection. Watch the... And what does Moses do? Moses, take your rod and lift it out over the water.

Watch the waters just separate. See, being in the center of God's will, we get to see some tremendous things. So, question.

Going back to the beginning of the slides up there. Are you there? Are you where God wants you to be? I'm...

Can you honestly say, I am in the will of God. I am exactly where he wants me to be. And when we talk about being there, I want you to know something else I forgot to mention.

Look at... Chapter 17 again. Verse... 5.

[19 : 09] Verse 5. So he went and did according to the word of the Lord. For he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith that is before Jordan.

That word dwelt, it means the idea of he went there to live. He went there and set up housekeeping.

He went there planning on staying there. When you find God's will for you, plan on staying there. Now, is he going to move me sometime?

Yes, he did him. He moved me to Zarephath before it was done. But for the time being, he went to the brook Cherith, and he wasn't planning on going anywhere until God told him to.

That's the way we should be. Find out where God wants us and be willing to go there and stay there until God moves us, until he gives us orders to do something different.

[20 : 07] But if you've never arrived there, you're missing out on God's best. You're missing out on what God has for you. When he shows you where there is, get there and stay there.

Be ready to follow him. Are you there? Think about that tonight. Am I, in the will of God, following him at this moment?

All right. Pray about that tonight, too.