

Are You There?

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[0 : 00] I want to go to 1 Kings chapter 17 again. You say, are you ever going to look at anything else? Yes. Tonight, even, I'm going to look at further in 1 Kings 17.

I'm getting past verse 1. So, 1 Kings chapter 17. It's in here somewhere.

Hmm. No, I don't have one. I've been getting lazy on Wednesday nights.

Daniel, can you go see if there's a pair of glasses on my desk? Yeah, I got a pair of glasses. Well, there should be some right there, because I was working here the other day, so there should be some right there.

Yeah, those ones, no thank you. He's got a pink pair back there. 1 Kings chapter 17.

[1 : 11] We're going to start looking at verse 1, but we're going to go past verse 1 tonight. All right. 1 Kings 17, 1 says, And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that it is before Jordan.

And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. 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.

And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening, and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

[2 : 24] Let's stop right there for a moment. So we've been talking about Elijah, talking about the fact that he went in before Ahab, told him it wasn't going to rain until he said so, and we talked about different things concerning that encounter that they had.

God had taken somebody who was a nobody, somebody that nobody had any real thoughts about, Elijah, and turns him into a man who's standing before the king and queen, delivering God's message to them.

And as he does that, he's doing it because Israel is under the grip of Baal worship. And Jezebel is partly responsible for that, because that's what they worshipped, where she was from.

She was from Zidon. And so, I mentioned before, Baal is a god of fertility, and when they worshipped Baal, they thought that when the sun rose, they were looking at the face of Baal.

Look at the sun, that's his face. When the thunderclouds came in and the rains came, Baal was blessing them with water to grow the things that they needed to eat.

[3 : 41] And Baal worship was just full of sensual things and all kinds of evil, and God hated it, and God hated the fact that his people were following it.

So he allows Elijah to go stand before Ahab and say, not going to rain, not at all, anymore. He says, you've been promoting Baal worship, you've been promoting all these different things, and God's telling Israel, look, I'll teach you who is really God.

It is Jehovah. And it is not going to rain. It doesn't matter what you do. You can worship Baal all you want to. You can do everything you say.

You can try anything you want. It is not going to rain because I said so. So, as soon as Elijah stands before the king and issues that challenge, God immediately tells him to leave there and go to the brook Cherith.

That's that word of prayer we'll talk tonight about. I think the title out there behind me is Are You There? So let's pray. Father, I pray that you would just minister to our hearts tonight, Lord.

[4 : 55] There's not a lot of us here. Lord, I pray that you would help us that are here to get your word and to get it in such a way that we understand the importance of being here.

The importance of being exactly where you want us to be. The importance of being in the center of your will. Lord, I pray that you would just help us to understand the importance of being there. There in the center of God's will.

Lord, I pray that you would help us tonight to be drawn closer to you in Jesus' name. Amen. He goes to the brook Cherith. He immediately leaves there.

God says, leave here. I want you to go to the brook Cherith. Cherith means to cut down or to cut off. So I want you to issue the message to Ahab and Jezebel and then I want you to immediately go to Cherith.

Cut yourself off from them. They're going to be looking for you. They're going to want to find you. I want you to be in a place where they can't find you. I want you to cut yourself off from being near them and being around them. I don't want them to find you.

[5 : 55] And I want you to notice the wording here. Look at verse 4. Again, he says, And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook and have, I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

Notice the word there. Go down to 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.

The importance of being where God wants you to be. The importance of being there and what God has for you. You know, what's really interesting, and I mentioned kind of, as we were doing this, Jezebel is from Zidon.

Her dad is the king of Zidon. And so, God says, here's what I want you to do. I want you to go to the brook Cherith, and I want you to be there, and I am going to have the ravens bring you food, and you've got the brook to drink from.

When that dries up, he's going to go to Zarephath, which is in Zidon, in Jezebel's backyard. Where was the last place you think they would look for Elijah when they're trying to get him?

[7 : 16] In Jezebel's backyard. Why would he be going there? But God says, that's where I want you. That's the place I have for you. Think about it. What's so important about there?

Suppose he decided not to go to the brook Cherith. I'll get this other brook over here closer to my house. I'll go there. Where was God sending the ravens with the food?

He says, I'm sending the food there. Suppose he goes, doesn't go to Zarephath, he goes to some other town. I'm going to go to Jericho. I'm going to hide out there. But God said, there's a widow woman in Zarephath who is ready to take care of you.

She is there at Zarephath. See, being where God wants us to be makes all the difference in the world and how things are going to turn out for us.

When we're not in the center of his will, when we're not doing what he wants us to do, things are going to get really difficult. But when we're in the center of his will, following him the way he wants us to, he says, look, I will take care of you.

[8 : 24] I will meet your needs. Now, the question tonight that I have behind me there is, are you there? Are you in the center of God's will? Are you doing what God has for you?

You might say, where is there? Where is what God has for me? Where is the center of things? Everybody's different. Let me show you.

For Elijah, there was a brook in a widow's house of Zarephath. For Noah, there was on an ark.

For Daniel, there was a prayer room that led to a lion's den. For the three Hebrew children, there was a fiery furnace. For Ruth, there was a field owned by Boaz.

For David, there was a throne in Israel. For Paul, there was a prison cell. For Jesus, there was a cross. See, our theirs can be different places.

[9 : 23] We don't all have to be in the same place, but we have to be where God wants us to be, where God can use us the way he wants us to be used, where we can accomplish the things that he has for us.

So in other words, there is a place in your life where God has placed you, where God is using you. God wants you to be used of him. when you're there, you'll know it.

And when you're not there, you'll know that too. When you're not doing what God wants you to do, when you're not in the middle of his will. I want to point out some things over this week and next week about where, what it means to be there in the middle of God's will.

What is he talking about when he says we need to be there? Well, I already pointed out verse four and verse nine. Number one, there is a place of promise. There is a place of promise.

God promised Elijah that ravens would feed him there. Now think about that for a minute. Do we have ravens around here? We have crows.

[10 : 41] Same idea. Okay. They're bigger. Yeah, I know they're bigger. Yeah. Yeah. But same idea. So at least around here, we know crows.

As much as you know about crows, is it in their nature to give away any food that they find? Especially not food we can eat. Yeah, especially not food we can eat.

Right. Exactly. And roadkill on the road. Yeah, sure. I'll share that with you. No. Huh? They take and hide it.

Yeah. And yet God says, here, I want you to be there. And when you're there, the ravens are going to bring you food morning and evening.

They're going to bring you bread and they're going to bring you meat. they're going to bring you two kinds of food. When you are there where you're supposed to be. Yeah, I kind of wonder about that too.

[11 : 41] But hey. Yeah, they were taking it from somebody's place. Maybe he has. He had plenty. Maybe they're getting it from there.

See, when you're there, you start to discover that God, will always do what he promises to do. He will take care of us.

He will meet our need. Romans 4, 21 says, and being fully persuaded that when he had promised, he was able also to perform. God promises something, he is going to do it.

He is going to meet that need. God is as good as his word. In Psalm 138, verse 2, it says this, I will worship toward his holy temple and praise his name for his loving kindness and for thy truth.

For thou has magnified thy word above all thy name. Think about what that does. The Bible tells us in Philippians about how God is going to exalt Jesus.

[12 : 49] He's going to lift his name above all names and everything. And notice what this verse says. Thou has magnified thy word above all thy name. Psalm 138, 2.

Psalm 138, 2. God says, I am going to be true to my word. What I have promised is going to happen. What I have promised, I will follow through on.

He keeps his promise whether you and I ever get there or not. I think if Elijah had gone somewhere else, the ravens are still going to show up at the brook cherith, dropping off food.

Whether Elijah was there or not. Because God has said, that's what they were going to do. So he was going to do it. See, when we get to the position where we're there, where God wants us to be, he's going to do as Ephesians 3.20 says, exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Who would think that ravens would be bringing him food? Who would think that ravens would give up food, let alone deliver it? It had to God because that was against their nature.

[13 : 57] It was against their nature, exactly. You know, their nature is to keep it. Their nature is to eat it all for themselves or hide it away for later. They went totally against their nature to do what God wanted them to do.

When God puts you there, wherever there is, God is going to take care of you there. second thing, running out of time already, second thing, there is a place of provision, place of provision.

Look at verse 6, and the ravens brought him food and flesh in the morning and bread and flesh, bread and flesh, in the evening and he drank of the brook.

Look at verse 15 and 16, and she went and did according to the saying of Elijah, and she and he and her house did eat many days, and the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruise of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.

So God's word again, God said, this is what's going to happen. You take care of Elijah, you meet his needs, you make sure that he is fed, you will be fed, your family will be fed, and can you imagine when he first went there, remember she was looking at things, she said, I've got enough to make one more meal, that's it.

[15 : 26] You imagine, excuse me, you imagine taking that meal out of there and making your thing, getting that oil and putting it together and knead that, say, that's all there is, wait a minute, no it isn't, there's more there.

Can you imagine seeing that? God working in that way, he has provision for all of them. You know, we were just talking about where the ravens got their food, and it's a good question, I have that down here, where did they get their food?

You know, the widow's house, to see the laws of nature suspended as we were just talking about, every day she took that stuff out of there and made that cake, cake, and there's more there.

Take it out, make a cake, and there's more there. That would just, that would be a phenomenal thing to see. Every day you're thinking, oh, this is going to be my last one, but God just keeps applying and keeps applying.

What a great God we have. See, when we get there in our own life, you're going to find that what God promises, God will bring things to pass.

[16 : 37] He knows how to meet the needs of his children. Go with me over to Matthew chapter six. Matthew chapter six. Familiar passage, you're going to know it well, but just to see it again.

Matthew chapter six, look at verse, beginning at verse 25. Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, nor yet for your body, what you shall put on.

Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.

Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? And take, why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.

They toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast in the oven, shall ye not much more be clothed, O ye of little faith?

[17 : 56] Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or where shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knoweth, ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. God says, trust me, watch, I will meet your needs, and take care of you.

That's what is exactly happening here for Elijah. Elijah, this is what I want you to do. You follow me, you stay with me, and watch what happens. Philippians 4, 19, but my God shall supply all your need according to your riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

What did we sing just at the end there? Nothing is impossible. God will take care of us. What is the one thing that's required for us to do? Be there in the center of his will, letting him work through us, carrying the message he has, and he says, I will take care of everything else.

You don't have to worry about food. You don't have to worry about clothing. You don't have to worry about all these other things. You stay here in the center of my will, and I will take care of your needs.

[19 : 26] A lot of us today don't live that way anymore, do we? And that includes us. Do we really trust God for everything that we have? Do we really trust God to meet our needs?

Do we really trust God to meet the needs of our church? to meet the needs of our individual homes? God says, you be in the center of my will where I want you, and let me do my work for you.

Okay? Let's stop there for tonight. We'll look at some more next week. walk walk learn talk with