

From The Brook Cherith To Zarephath

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[0:00] Praise the Lord. I appreciate Pastor Eccles, Eccles family, and all my other friends here. You guys are friends to me. I love you guys. And God is so good. You know, just the adding of old Trev on those, what is it called? Percussions?

Or what do they call them? Cajon, whatever. Yeah. Man, it just adds a whole different element. It really does. You know, I'm like, who needs drums? You know, it was, it was, it's, it's good.

And I just thank God that we can worship him in spirit and in truth. And, you know, today I feel heaviness today. I, I don't say that lightly. I believe God has a word for somebody today. And I, I don't take preaching lightly. I don't, you know, I don't regurgitate messages.

You know, we all regurgitate sayings and stuff, but I don't regurgitate messages. I don't, I don't, I don't try to AI message, you know, I don't, I try to seek God's will and what he would have for a service.

And I was just telling your pastor today, I feel a heaviness. And I don't say that often. Yes, there's a heaviness when I preach, but I feel there's a, there's a heaviness. There's something in the balance today for somebody. And this message that I'm going to preach, I mean, it's, it's, it's, it's a message. It's, it's the word of God.

[1:30] The word of God is, it has a heaviness to itself. It's, it's something that we have to cherish, but handle with care. And, and I'm just so thankful that God is here. And if you turn to first King 17, but I just thank God for this spirit that I feel here.

There's a spirit here that I feel, and that's the Holy spirit. It's a spirit that we can't take for granted. And, and, and, you know, I was, I was praying when you were saying you're going to do outreach on Thursday.

And I heard you saying the same thing. And I've heard it many times. It's praying, you know, God, stir somebody up, wake somebody up. When you knock on that door, they answer that door and say, I was waiting for you. God told me you were coming for me because there's hungry people in the city. There's hungry people.

First King 17, one through four in Elijah, the Tishabite, who was of inhabitants of Gilead said unto him, as a Lord God of Israel, liveeth behold, before whom I stand, there shall be no dew nor rain for three years.

According to my word and the word of the Lord came unto him saying, go thee hence and turn the eastward and hide thyself by the brook Cherith. And that is before the Jordan and it shall be that thou shall drink at the brook.

[2:48] And I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. Let's pray. Dear heavenly father, God, we come before you today. God, ask you, Lord God, convey this word that you laid on my heart.

God, your word is anointed. God, would you anoint me to preach your word? God, help us, Lord, to be hearers of your doers of your word, not hearers only. God, today move today in Jesus name in this church.

I'll give you all the honor and all the glory. You may be seated. The title of my message is from the brook Cherith to Zarephath. There's droughts been recorded in history.

The longest drought, according to the prophet Google, is our Orishia, Chile lasted 172 months from October 1903. To January 1918.

We have the Dust Bowl drought in the United States in the 1930s that lasted from July 1928 to May of 1942. And this drought, scholars say, in 1 Kings 17 lasted three and a half years.

[3:50] We see the famine. And Joseph foretells to the Pharaoh in a dream, seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. And Joseph, through God's instruction, telling them to put away the fifth

of harvest for the famine.

And in that time, Egypt was able to sell food to other nations and including Joseph's family, his estranged family.

And we understand that through that time, Joseph's life, he didn't understand what would happen in the beginning would be turned into good. And a drought is just a prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall.

It's a shortage of water. And see, in the biblical times, water was everything. Crops were everything. If you didn't have water, you didn't have animals.

If you didn't have animals, you didn't have food. And if you didn't have food, you died. And you had to go to the well and draw your water.

[5:00] You know, we take a lot of things for granted. You know, we go and we turn the faucet on. You know, if water doesn't come out, something big happened. Somebody hit a, in town here, somebody hit a main water main.

Or, you know, if you live out in the country like me and you have a well, the power's off. Or something's wrong with the well. And you got to get somebody out there to fix it. But water is essential for us now.

And it was essential then. The other day, as I was, I don't know what I was doing. I was milling around in one of the cabinets I don't usually get into in our house. And I found one of those straws that you put in the water and you suck in it.

And it filters the water, you know, for when you're up in the mountains. And I was thinking, oh, yeah, there's that. And then there's the boiling water method. Right? You got to boil water for a certain amount of time.

It kills the parasites because, you know, let's take it. We go up to the mountains, you know. Us men, we were lucky to go up with Pastor Shane up there to the mountains in that lake.

[6:05] I mean, that water looks really delicious. But it wouldn't have been delicious in your stomach. Probably would have cleaned us out for several days if we would have drank that water. Now, we could have took a straw and drank it.

Or we could have took it and boiled it, killed the parasites. And it would have been good. But nevertheless, water has to be filtered and clean. And see, there's times in our life that we go through personal droughts.

Who's ever been through a personal drought? Who's ever just felt dry in your spirit? You just don't really have a whole lot of emotion.

You know, for us married couples, you love her. You love him. But he just doesn't bring you or she doesn't bring you a whole lot of joy in the moment.

You know, it's not the butterflies and roses. It's just you get up in the morning and, you know, you make her coffee or she makes you coffee.

[7:13] And you kiss goodbye. And, you know, there's love there. But it's not like it was in the beginning. And it's a drought.

You got to fight past that drought in your marriage. You got to fight for your marriage. You got to fight because there's going to be times in your marriage, in your relationship.

There's droughts. Been with my wife going on 24 wonderful years of marriage. And I'll tell you what. There was times in those early years.

Boy, she straightened me out. I never straightened her out. She's always she's just always been perfect. But there was times where she had to put me straight. There was times that.

I didn't understand some things, Shane. I didn't understand some things. And she had to straighten me out. But see, when that was happening, I was having a drought in my spiritual life with God.

[8:12] In my spiritual walk, there was a drought. Because see, our actions, everything we do once you become a believer and once you go through the upper room experience.

See, this is an upper room experience church. See, there's a lot of churches today that had church. But see, they're still stuck in the book of Acts 1. They're waiting for the promise.

And that promise is already ready to be poured out. They haven't gone up in that upper room and received that Holy Spirit. There's too many churches that are stuck in Acts 1.

They haven't had the upper room experience. See, this church has an upper room experience. See, we're on the northern end of the upper room experience. And we understand we still have to have that daily upper room experience.

We can never have enough. We can never get to where we have enough. Because see, that's when we get into droughts. There's droughts. We have career droughts.

[9:10] How many here have had career droughts? Where it's like, I didn't go to college. But if you went to college and you're like, Lord, I paid to go do this? I went to go do this?

And, you know, all I hear is my dad always told me. I'm a second generation phone guy. My dad always told me. He said, son, he goes, the one thing you learn about the phone company. He goes, you're only going to hear what you do wrong, not what you do good.

You're only going to hear something if you do something wrong. So I don't want to hear anything. Just leave me alone. But we go through droughts. Maybe you're jobless. Maybe you know somebody that's jobless.

And, man, you know, heart to heart, man, they're a good worker. What's going on? They can't get a job. And they're going through a drought. They can't get a job. You know? Maybe you're talking to a co-worker that's going through a drought in their career.

Maybe you're thriving in your career. And you're like, man, I can't relate. But you've got to step back and say, hey, yeah, I've been there. You know, sometimes you have to sit back and just listen.

[10:16] Sometimes we just have to listen. Sometimes people don't really want to answer. They just want you to listen. How about health droughts? How many here have been through health droughts?

You're all kind of young here, maybe. But I've been through my set of health droughts. I don't know. A lot of you know I'm a cancer survivor. My bout with cancer was not anywhere near what most people have to go through.

I didn't have to do. Well, I chose not to do no chemo or radiation. I'm nine, ten years past. It was a God thing. But there's some that go through health challenges, health bouts.

There's people that daily have to get up and deal with ailments. Daily have to get up and deal with bad knees, bad ankles, bad hips. It's hard for them just to get up and function daily because pain unmotivates them.

You know, I say sometimes to parents, I say, you know, pain is a great motivator for kids. But when we get older, I don't like pain. I don't like pain.

[11:24] But see, we go. There's some that go through health droughts. And there's a lot. And we see elders. You know, Elder Brother Johnson. I know all you know Elder Brother Johnson. Today's his 81st birthday.

I'll be 46 at the end of the year. And I'm thinking, Lord. I don't know how I'm going to feel at 81. I don't know if I'd be going to church, you know, physically at 81.

Thank the Lord for online viewing. But, you know, we take when you're young, you take it for granted. You take your health for granted. See, Philippians 4, 6, and 7 says, Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

Let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.

See, prayer changes things. It's our communication and it's our connection with God. See, we have to have a daily prayer with God. If you hear anything else, don't hear anything else of this message here today.

[12:36] If you haven't started a daily prayer life, a daily prayer log, a daily reading of the word, start it tomorrow. Do yourself a favor and start it tomorrow.

And go home tonight and pray to God and ask him to help you start it tomorrow. Because it's what will sustain you through any drought in any season. See, you have to learn how to hear the voice of God in any season of your life.

You have to learn how to walk in what God wants you to walk in in any season of your life. See, it's not God's will for you to be in a season of drought.

But see, our human minds accept it by resting in other things. We rest in other things instead of resting in him.

We have to be careful. Information is so quick at our fingertips nowadays. And every day it gets quicker. And we could go and we can talk to buddies.

[13:41] We can get online. We can talk to our husband. We can talk to our wife. We can talk to coworkers. And we can get information. And we can get our ear itched. But is it information God wants you to hear?

Is it information God wants you to hear? Is it going to help you in the current season that you're in? Because see, the word and prayer is the only thing that's going to help you.

Hearing what God has given to the man of God in your life to preach into your life is what you need to hear. Staying connected. No matter what season you're in, if you're in a drought season, you must and have to be connected to God.

You have to be connected. You can't give up. It is not ever time, it never will be time, to throw in the towel. No matter how you feel.

No matter how people tell you. If somebody tells you not to go to church, it's not of God. I'll go as far as to say it's of the devil. I'll go as far as to say that.

[14 : 41] It's of the devil. Anybody that's going to give you wise counsel is not going to tell you not to go to church. Furthermore, a truth preaching church.

See, that's the difference between this church and every other church in Houston. And every other church in the outside that has not been through that upper room experience. Does not preach this one God apostolic message.

That's the difference. That's our difference. See, the Bible, it will correct you. And with correction, it directs you.

Just like our children. They have to be corrected. It's sad, I know, grandma and grandma. Kids have to be corrected. You know? Without correction, there's no direction.

And then the cops will correct them when they get older. You know? It's that old saying, you know, the mama crying about her son getting arrested.

[15 : 38] He's like, well, you didn't tell them what to do when they were younger. Now the cops are telling them what to do. And they're not listening. You know? It's one of those things. But we look in the word of God for direction.

Here's some direction scriptures. Proverbs 3, 5 through 6. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. And lean not onto your own understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge Him. And He will direct your path. I know that's, everybody here has heard that scripture. Proverbs 16 and 19. We can make our plans.

But the Lord determines our steps. We got it. We can have it all figured out. We have the money in the bank. We have the reservations.

But God determines, He determines our steps. Proverbs 4 and 11. I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. I, God.

[16 : 35] God instruct us in wisdom. God leads us along straight paths. Proverbs 16 and 3. Commit to the Lord whatever you do. And He will establish your plans.

If you don't know what to do. If you're in a career drought. And you're seeking direction. Commit to God first. And His plan in your life.

Your career and your life will unfold. Because you know why? He has what's best for you. He has what's best for you. Man, I've been going that long.

See, Elijah's ministry involved calling the northern kingdom Israel back to worship of God. Under King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, the people had largely abandoned God in the favor of veil worship. Idol worship. Brother Gwynn was talking about that today. Talking about idol worship. You know, what's idol worship? Anything that's other than God. There's so many things in this world that people idolize.

[17 : 39] There's so many things. You can idol your husband or your wife. You can idol your children. It's anything that's above God. God's got to be number one in your life. And in Elijah's ministry, there were some supernatural things, right?

The prophetic announcement of the drought. The confrontation of 850 pagan priests. The miraculous provisions that we're going to talk about here in King 17.

The raising of the dead. Calling fire from heaven. And the ascension into heaven. The take it away. And then Elisha takes over.

But see, as I was going through this 1 Kings 17. And as I was praying to God to give me a word.

You see, Elisha prophesied to Ahab of the drought. That didn't sit too well with Ahab.

[18 : 45] And so God tells him, go to the brook Cherith. And when you go there by the Jordan, I will feed you. And I will give you drink.

And you will know when the brook dries up, it is time to move on. And God used ravens in that time. To bring bread twice a day.

Bread and meat twice a day. To feed Elisha. And Elisha drank from that brook. See, it was a lonely place. For Elisha.

And when you look at the meaning of the brook Cherith. In Bible days and in the meaning now, it means to cut or to separate.

To cut or to separate. There's some people in here today. That you're at the place where you have to cut or separate. From some things until God can take you.

[19 : 46] To where God wants you to be. There's some separation. From some things. People. Things in your past. That God's trying to cut away from you.

To take you in. To Zarephath. You see. Well, preacher. You don't know. The things that I'm going through.

You. You don't know. The people that I know. No, I don't. But God knows. And God knows what's good for you. And God knows who to keep in your life.

And to take out of your life. God knows. Who's going to be here. In six months. A year. Till he tarries. He knows. He knows every name on these pews that are going to be here.

He knows when you're going to get to the point. When you're going to have to find another place. Or use another room in this building. Because he knows. But see, there's a time. That we have to land at that brook.

[20 : 46] We have to cut. And we have to separate. What God does not want in our life. What God has called unclean in our life.

And there has to be that separation. And we. Have to accept that. But even in the drought. Ahab. Accepted that. And listened and heard. From the voice of God. See the cutting. And the pulling away. Is the uncomfortable part. The cutting and the separation.

In our life. Sometimes. Is hard. To accept. But see it's that. Cutting and separation. That's going to lead you. In.

To your Zarephath. You see because. When it came time. For Elisha. When the brook dried up. And he made his way. Into Zarephath.

[21 : 42] As he comes into. The city. The Bible says. There was a widow. Gathering. Sticks. And again. He was going.

Through a drought. I haven't coughed in a week. And he sees the widow. And God tells him.

To go. To the widow. Goes to the widow. She's collecting sticks. He says. Can you make me a cake? She looks at the prophet.

And she says. I can't make you a cake. I'm getting these sticks. To build a fire. To make a cake. Because all I have. Is enough oil. And meal. Flour. To make one cake.

For me and my son. And we're going to die. As he goes. He tells her. Do what the man of God. Asks you to do. So the widow goes.

[22 : 37] And she makes Elijah. The cake. And the Bible says. For the rest of the drought. She would go. There would be just enough flour.

There would be just enough oil. For her and her son. She makes a room for there. For the prophet to stay. But you see. Zarephath means refining.

Smelting pot. Or refining. You see. God can't refine you. Until you cut some things off. Until you. Get rid of some things. In your past. Until you decide. I want to go deeper in you. But see. It's in that. Refining. That life's still not perfect.

It's in that refining. Where things still happen. And maybe you. You go. And you bend your knees down. And you still feel like. You're in a drought. But just a little enough oil.

[23 : 35] That day. There's just enough flour. For you to draw from. There's just enough. In your refining. To get. What God has.

For you. In your life. And this goes on. And Elisha comes. And goes.

And you can imagine. That widow. How much faith she had. Shane. How much faith would you have. If you.

Just. Trusted in God. And you said. God. I'm going to live off this flower. And oil. And tell you. Tell you. Give me something else. I believe God could do that today.

I believe God can do that. See. We. We. We look at the miracles of the past. And we think. He can't. He's the same yesterday. Today and forever. I'm crazy enough to think.

[24 : 32] God can go. Split. Fox Grove. Down the middle. Just like he did the Red Sea. He can do it. And we. We. We question him. And we.

And we. We wonder. Well. Really God. And he's trying to refine us. He's trying to take us. To where he wants to be.

But see. Even in that refining. There's things that happen. Because. When you read further on. That widow. Her son. Passes away. Her son.

Passes away. The prophet comes back to town. She gets mad at him. Look at all this I've done. Like she's. She's.

She's thinking. This shouldn't happen to me. I listen to you. God sustained me. Now. Now what's going on here? My. My son. My only son's dead. And the prophet takes that boy.

[25 : 30] Tell me. Say no typology. If not any. Takes that boy to the upper room. Leans over him. Three times. Praise to God. And that boy raises back up.

See. Even in our. When we. When God cuts things off. In Cherith. The brook Cherith. Take us through our refining moment. In Zarephath. We still got to lean on.

That upper room experience. We still got to lean on. That upper room experience. We. We can never get past. The upper room experience. In our life. That upper room experience.

Is death by repentance. Being in. Filled with Jesus. In Jesus name. The gift. Of tongues. And the Holy Ghost. And being baptized. In Jesus name. Because see.

That's what separates us. From everyone else. That's what's going to give us. Our direction. And as you stand here today. Sorry. I went a little longer. Than I.

[26 : 27] I thought. I. I would. But. As we're here today. The question. That begs an answer.

Where are you right now. In your walk with God. Are you at the brook Cherith. Are you. Are there still things. That are. Having to be. Or needing to be cut off. In your life.

Or on you. Are you in Zarephath. Right now. Are you in your refining moment. Because see. We never get out of our refining moment.

The only time. We're going to be refined. Is when the rapture takes place. The only time. That we're going to. Be made. That he takes the righteous. Right. And the holy.

And the only time. That. We. Quit. Moving in him. Is when he takes us. See. You have two choices. Stay at the brook.

[27 : 27] Our move. To Zarephath. And if you're at the brook. Eventually. That water is going to dry up. Eventually. Those birds. Are going to quit bringing food.

Eventually. You won't hear the voice of God. In your life. You will. You will. You will either be confused. And have a spiritual suicide.

Or you will go to somebody. For an answer. Of where to go. And I pray that. In that time. That you will be able to tune your ear.

To the voice of God. Tune your ear. To the things of what God wants to do. I know this is a simple message. Here today. But.

Where are you at. In your walk. With God. Is there still some things. That you got to cut off. Before you go into that walk. Where God wants to make you.

[28 : 23] The person. That God wants you to be. These altars are open right now. God. Ask you Lord God. To touch us Lord. Touch our minds.

And our hearts.