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P. 356

Dr. Summer

STUDY NUMBER ONE I Kings 17:1-7

TEXT:

- v. 1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years except by my word."
- v. 2 And the word of the Lord came to him, saying,
- v. 3 "Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.
- v. 4 "And it shall be that you shall drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there."
- v. 5 So he went and did according to the word of the Lord, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.
- v. 6 And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook.
- v. 7 And it happened after a while, that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

INTRODUCTORY AND BACKGROUND MATERIAL:

It is going to be our privilege to study the biography of one of the Bible's great men. We will be looking at his life in eight phases as we study the passages of scripture that relate to his experiences.

Before we actually begin in the study, I would like to look at the background of the times in which the prophet lived, and I would like to consider this first of all historically, and second, religiously.

HISTORICALLY:

Tracing the history of the children of Israel after they cross the Jordan River and entered into possess the land as recorded in the book of Joshua, we find that disobedience, idolatry, and immorality led to a great deal of civil strife and disorder and bondage under foreign powers as is recorded in the book of Judges. When the sad story of the book of Judges comes to a close, it is recorded by the writer that everyone did that which was right in their own eyes.

Calvin: "It is bad to live under a prince who permits nothing, but much worse to live under one who permits everything."

It was at this point in Israel's history that they were deeply desirous to be like other nations and to have a king to rule over them. The Lord granted their request for a king in first of all giving them Saul. Following Saul's reign, we have the powerful and successful reign of David, a man after God's own heart; and then Solomon comes on the scene with the richest and most extensive kingdom of them all with the assignment to build the temple.

With the conclusion of Solomon's reign, the ten tribes in the north split off from the tribes in the south, and now there are two kingdoms, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Whereas there was a sprinkling of good kings in the south, all of the kings in the north were unanimous in leading the people away from God and their devotion to Jehovah. Over and over again the writer of the Kings and Chronicles in summarizing the lives of these kings in the north, says, "They did evil in the sight of the Lord."

Jeroboam started it all with Golden Calves in the North & South Bethel & Dan

Samaria
Jerusalem

I Kgs 16: 30-33

"And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him. And it came about, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went to serve Baal & worshipped him.

So he erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria.

And Ahab also made the Asherah. Thus Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel, than all the kings of Israel who were before him."

① Jeroboam - 22 yrs.

② Nadab - Assassination 2 yrs.

③ Baasha - war ASA 24 yrs.

④ Elah - Assassination 2 years

⑤ Zimri - Suicide (David Koresh) 7 days

⑥ Omri - 12 years (Samaria)

⑦ Ahab - Jezebel 22 years

62

22

84 years

* It is the northern kingdom that concerns us because this is where Elijah comes into the picture. It has been ~~fifty-six years~~ ^{62 years} since the division of the kingdom, and already there have been ~~six kings~~ who have ruled over Israel. There has been a great deal of civil strife and blood shed and power struggle going on as each new king takes the authority.

And then we have the arrival on the scene the son of Omri, King Ahab. Ahab was the worst king yet to take over the leadership of the nation Israel.

What a mixture of a man Ahab was. Some of the finer qualities were his. He was an able and prosperous monarch, built a house of ivory, was a good soldier, and yet he deliberately sold himself to work wickedness: taught Israel to worship Baal instead of the Lord, and established idols for that purpose.

Ahab, the seventh king of Israel, was one of the strongest and at the same time one of the weakest of Israel's kings. Had he possessed a stronger nature, he might have overcome some of the evils of his time, but he failed to comprehend the greatness of Jehovah, he failed to stand for the highest justice, and his sins are visited upon his posterity.

Steve Farrar: Bill & Hilary Relationship

Ahab was no mean politician either. Because of his desire to have an alliance with the Phoenicians, he formed a marriage with the clever and wealthy daughter of the king of Tyre whose name was Jezebel. It is recorded in Proverbs 31:3, "The influence of a bad woman is the power which destroyeth kings." Jezebel was a champion of foreign culture, a woman who was vindictive and unscrupulous in all of her ways. She was willing to stoop to anything to get her desired objectives realized.

RELIGIOUSLY:

Ahab and Jezebel lead the children of Israel away from the worship of Jehovah God to that of Baal. She was able to introduce this religion, and also bring her priests with her. Jehovah might be the God of the past. Baal is the god of the present. He it is who fills our cradles, our sheepfolds and our cattle sheds. He it is who is the god of our good crops that our barns might be overflowing. Baal was the god of fertility and fruitfulness. The altars to Jehovah God were torn down, and in their place were built temples and idols erected to the god Baal. **New religions filled w/ hope & promise !!**

The character of Jezebel is all dark without a single light spot. She is the biblical and historical example of a woman at her lowest, a woman under the domination of every evil passion and villainous emotion. Nothing beautiful can be said of her. She was both corrupt and cruel.

* In Jezebel's Baalism, human sacrifices were offered and sexual and licentious acts were indulged in. Her religion catered to the lowest and basest instincts in human nature.

As soon as Jezebel became queen with absolute power, she set about destroying the worship and witness of Jehovah. While protecting her own idols & priests she attempted the utter destruction of the prophets of the Lord and with them

Lot like #7

Saul!
Never got his
Act together!

Never Reported
Liz Taylor
Richard Burton
Relationship

Guaranteed
ex. Recovery
Chicken in
every pot
2 cars in
every garage

Stop
inflation

- ① human Sacrifice
- ② Immoral
- ③ woman leaders
- ① Abortion
- ② Gay
- ③ women like

as a necessary consequence, the sacred books. Hers was the defiance of God and His law, and the first record of the use of civil power against true religion by a woman. Self-centered Jezebel sought no advice and gave none. She was ruthless in her murderous ambition and Ahab was under her complete domination and was as a cat's paw in her hands. Ahab was king in name, but Jezebel ruled. She ruled the king, the home, and the nation. It is then to this situation that God brings His man of the hour to confront the king and the queen and the leaders of the nation with a powerful message that God is still alive, and that Israel is His people.

Program

Verse One: Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."

Nothing New Human Nature the Same

How suddenly Elijah comes on the scene. It is with the suddenness of a flash of lightening and the clap of thunder out of the eastern sky. Elijah, the Tishbite, a man whose name meant 'my God is Jehovah.'

The title 'Tishbite' probably refers to the city of Tishby in the land of Gilead. It says next of Elijah that he was of the settlers of Gilead. This is on the eastern side of the Jordan River, and the dwellers of Gilead were a rugged group of individuals.

We have nothing of Elijah's parentage or past other than what has just been recorded here in this first verse.

Here we see Elijah storming into the palace into the presence of the king of the land to bring a message from the Lord.

We can discern from other passages in the scripture that which precipitated Elijah's action.

What got him moving? Why did he do this?

Deut. 11:16 and 17, "Beware lest your hearts be deceived, and you turn away and serve other gods and worship them or the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain, and the ground will not yield its fruit, and you will perish quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you."

CONFRONT The Culture

James 5:16, 17, and 18, "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months, and he prayed again, and the sky poured rain, and the earth produced its fruit."

Lord here and send Aaron

Elijah, convinced of the word of God, challenged by his prayer, with courage he comes to confront the king of the land.

Word send someone! Guess what you just volunteered

His message is very brief but to the point. "As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years except by my word."

Let's analyze together this message which he brings to the king. "As the Lord, the God of Israel lives." Elijah is convinced that God is still alive. He is not dead, He is not a God of the past. He is a God of the eternal present. He

I know my Redeemer liveth...
He ever liveth to make intercession...

Enter Elijah

Good ways into Ahab's 22 Years!

He is A Dallasite

Moses Farewell Address.

Camel Knees Prayer warrior

Renegade From the rural regions really raps the Knuckles of royalty with his Message

Woman Trying to Achieve equality w/ man Is An Under-Achiever

Leviticus 26

18-20

"And if none of this works in getting your attention, I'll discipline you seven times over for your sins. I'll break your strong pride: I'll make the skies above you like a sheet of tin and the ground under you like cast iron. No matter how hard you work, nothing will come of it: No crops out of the ground, no fruit off the trees.

21-22

"If you defy me and refuse to listen, your punishment will be seven times more than your sins. I'll set wild animals on you; they'll rob you of your children, kill your cattle, and decimate your numbers until you'll think you are living in a ghost town.

23-26

"And if even this doesn't work and you refuse my discipline and continue your defiance, then it will be my turn to defy you. I, yes I, will punish you for your sins seven times over: I'll let war loose on you, avenging your breaking of the covenant; when you huddle in your cities for protection, I'll send a deadly epidemic on you and you'll be helpless before your enemies; when I cut off your bread supply, ten women will bake bread in one oven and ration it out. You'll eat, but barely — no one will get enough.

27-35

"And if this — *even this!* — doesn't work and you still won't listen, still defy me, I'll have had enough and in hot anger will defy you, punishing you for your sins seven times over: famine will be so severe that you'll end up cooking and eating your sons in stews and your daughters in barbecues; I'll smash your sex-and-religion shrines and all the paraphernalia that goes with them, and then stack your corpses and the idol-corpses in the same piles — I'll abhor you; I'll turn your cities into rubble; I'll clean out your sanctuaries; I'll hold my nose at the "pleasing aroma" of your sacrifices. I'll turn your land into a lifeless moonscape — your enemies who come in to take over will be shocked at what they see. I'll scatter you all over the world and keep after you with the point of my sword in your backs. There'll be nothing left in your land, nothing going on in your cities. With you gone and dispersed in the countries of your enemies, the land, empty of you, will finally get a break and enjoy its Sabbath years. All the time it's left there empty, the land will get rest, the Sabbaths it never got when you lived there.

36-39

"As for those among you still alive, I'll give them over to fearful timidity — even the rustle of a leaf will throw them into a panic. They'll run here and there, back and forth, as if running for their lives even though no one is after them, tripping and falling over one another in total confusion. You won't stand a chance against an enemy. You'll perish among the nations; the land of your enemies will eat you up. Any who are left will slowly rot away in the enemy lands. Rot. And all because of their sins, their sins compounded by their ancestors' sins.

"ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THEY CONFESS . . . "

40-42

"On the other hand, if they confess their sins and the sins of their ancestors, their treacherous betrayal, the defiance that set off my defiance that sent them off into enemy lands; if by some chance they soften their hard hearts and make amends for their sin, I'll remember my covenant with Jacob, I'll remember my covenant with Isaac, and, yes, I'll remember my covenant with Abraham. And I'll remember the land.

43-45

"The land will be empty of them and enjoy its Sabbaths while they're gone. They'll pay for their sins because they refused my laws and treated my decrees with contempt. But in spite of their behavior, while they are

- ① Aware of what is going on!
- ② Anticipate meeting Him! -4-
- ③ Accountable for Your life!

Heb.
4:13

is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The fact that He is alive lets Ahab know that his departure into idolatry is not going unnoticed by the living God, and as a result of this, there are going to be consequences which are evidences of His being alive. Heb. 10:31

New Creation
Changing

We would do well to ask ourselves the question, "What is there in our lives today to prove to a lost and dying world that He is truly alive?" Love → Living → Looking For → Looking Like

Talk to Him

The next phrase of Elijah's address is seen in the words, "...before whom I stand..." Elijah makes it clear that God is not only alive but that he stands before Him in His power, and with the promise of His (presence) and (protection) and encompassed by His (peace) and cared for by His loving (provision). Elijah has a (relationship) with God. It is the living God who sent him, and it is the living God to whom he'll give account for his faithfulness in life down here in the accomplishment of His will.

- ① Relationship
- ② Responsibility

Phillippians chapter 2 tells us that "every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Here comes Elijah with his convictions and courage. He speaks the message of God. This is God with His man, His movement, and His plans. The times were fit for Elijah, and Elijah was fit for the times. mission message

Now comes the message of judgment. "...surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years except by my word."

Already 6 months Drought! Hosea 10:12

As a result of Elijah's time of prayer and study of the promises of God, he now can speak with authority that the judgment of God is going to fall upon his people for their idolatrous practices.

One man of you shall chase a thousand. For the Lord your God, He it is that fights for you, as He has promised you.

How comfortable and secure Elijah feels speaking forth a message which has the authority of God's word behind it.

Here for only a brief minute Elijah is in the public eye. He speaks a message and then he makes an exit. Probably the response of those who heard was one of great laughter. Ha! Ha! Ha! It must be some maniac who has broken loose from the come and give such a ridiculous prophecy.

Probably wanted the whole plan - Just A step at a time Verse Two And the word of the Lord came to him, saying.

As soon as his servant had been faithful in delivering the message, the Lord has new instructions. Isaiah 30:21, "And your ears will hear a word behind you, this is the way. Walk in it, whenever you turn to the right or to the left." Acts 9:6 "Arise go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

In endeavoring to break down these verses that remain in the chapter, it is Howard Hendricks who uses four key words to outline the progression of the rest of the passage. At verses two and three, he places the word command. At verse four, the word promise, and at verses five and six, the word response, and verse seven, test.

- ① Command v. 2-3
- ② Promise v. 4
- ③ Response v. 5-6
- ④ Test v. 7

* ① Command v.3

v.3

Next, let us examine the command that is given in verse three. "Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan."

The Lord asks the prophet to go from this location and to turn to the east with the purpose of hiding himself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.

* * Having fulfilled his first public assignment, the Lord now wants to take His servant into seclusion to prepare him for the next major confrontation. It would have been easy for Elijah to balk here, and to have resisted this command of the Lord, but because he is sensitive to the fact that the Lord knows what is best he is immediately obedient. Perhaps his going back to the eastern side of Jordan is somewhat like going back to the homeland since this was also the location of Gilead.

In the palace, the laughter had begun to turn to fear because the times for the rains had come and gone, and the land is beginning to experience the marks of the prophesied drought, and now everyone is beginning to search for the prophet who spoke these words. He is searched for in every city, in every village, and in all the desert places. A reward is probably placed upon his head, and Ahab probably placed him at the top of the FBI's list of the most wanted men.

What is this command that is given to Elijah? "Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan." Elijah was going to learn at Cherith that whatever future circumstances he might face, he could be assured of the Lord's protection and provision.

John 14:27: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful."

How much Elijah needed to learn that they also serve who only stand and wait: the ability of quiet waiting and loving patience as the Lord answers the prayer of His servant. For John the Baptist, it was from the deserts he came to bring his message. For Jesus Christ, it was forty days and forty nights in the wilderness. For the apostle Paul, it was many times in prison that the Lord used these experiences to enrich his service for their future public ministry.

* * At this rocky retreat, Elijah is learning to trust in the Lord and do good. "So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." He is learning to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

He does not make known this will so we can evaluate it. He wants us to obey it exactly as revealed...

* ② Promise v.4

With the command comes a promise in verse 4: "And it shall be that you shall drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there."

Just like the Lord miraculously provided for the children of the children of Israel in the wilderness in giving them manna on a daily basis to meet their needs, and quail for meat, and water in the desert, so the Lord faithfully uses the birds to bring provision to Elijah by the brook Cherith.

Why are you here?

Provide For you there Prodigal Matt. 6:33 Are you in His will? Joseph to Jacob → there! Shut him off from all other supplies + threw him on Himself.

How do you get your Money?

Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

I Timothy 6:6-8, "But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. We brought nothing into the world so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content."

3 Response

The response is given in verses 5 and 6. "So he went and did according to the word of the Lord, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook." In verse 5 we get Elijah's response, and in verse 6 we get the Lord's response. As Elijah is obedient and did according to the word of the Lord, the Lord was faithful to His promise that He had made in verse 4 and gave the provision for Elijah when he was in the place of the Father's will.

4 TEST

Verse Seven:

And it happened after a while, that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. Abraham, Jacob, Job; 1Pe 4:12

Here the Lord tests His servant.

wants to teach us to trust in Himself + Not His gifts.

Hendricks points out on this test, "I am sure many people, perhaps you, are sitting by a drying brook. It could be financial, it could be physical, it could be intellectual for those in school, it could be emotional, it could be spiritual. And you're asking, 'Lord, what happened?' And He answers, 'Nothing. I'm just answering your prayer.' Put yourself in Elijah's position for just a moment. Here he sits and the brook diminishes, becomes a trickle, then only a few puddles are left, and then even they evaporate. How do you respond to that. I have the highest respect for Elijah. I wouldn't have been able to sit there and watch the brook diminish. I would have gotten out my road map and began looking for another water hole in the area. My motto would be, 'Don't sit there, do something.' But Elijah sat by the drying brook. Can you imagine what he must have thought. 'How come the brook is drying up? What caused that?' Finally it dawned on him with impact: the brook is drying up because I prayed that it would. Sometimes you've asked, 'Lord, make me like your Son,' and He took you at your word and began the process, and you said, 'Lord, what happened? Why did you allow this to come into my life? What are you doing with this drying brook?' He answers, 'Nothing, except answering your prayer.' Don't ever forget Jesus Christ, though He was a son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Perhaps the Spirit of God is saying to many of us today, 'I want to minister through you, but before I can ever minister through you, I must minister to you.' Don't despise the educational experience of your drying brook. Don't throw in the towel. Let patience have her perfect work, that you may be mature and complete. He wants to make you just like His Son.

My Soul wait thou only upon God; For my expectation is From Him.

CONCLUSION:

What are the lessons we learned from these first seven verses? First of all, we learned that the Lord is alive, and His word tells us that all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Because He is alive, He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Secondly, it is before this living

Don't Do something sit there!

Turn From Failing Cherish to UNFailing Saviour.

① relationships
② responsibility

-7-

5 LESSONS

God that we stand. We're going to be held accountable. We've been given a life to live, and how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Because we are going to stand before Him, it is the longing desire of our hearts that we might hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter into the joys that I've prepared for you." Thirdly we have learned from this series of studies that when the Lord commands, it is our responsibility to obey. And when we obey, the Lord will be faithful to His promises of provision. Fourthly, we have learned that the Lord often tests us in the pursuit of His will with experiences and circumstances that are meant to reveal His Son in us.

LESSONS:

- #1 The Lord is Alive, Aware & Active in our lives.
- #2 We are going to stand before Him & He will render a verdict...
- #3 The Lord will provide for you in the center of His will.
- #4 The Lord allows tests to develop character.
- #5 We ought to be those who are looking for & looking like our Lord...



ILLUSTRATION

C. S. Lewis on How Pain Transforms Us[Send to printer](#)

Topics: Character; Christian life; Experiencing God; Growth; Pain; Spiritual formation; Spiritual growth; Suffering; Transformation; Trust

Filters: Christian Culture; Famous People; Quotes

References: Romans 8:28-29 , Galatians 4:19 , Colossians 1:27 

Tone: Commend

Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what he is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised.

But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is he up to? The explanation is that he is building quite a different house from the one you thought of—throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards.

You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage, but He is building up a palace. He intends to come and live in it himself.

C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity submitted by Andy Scarcliffe, Edinburgh, Scotland

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