

## I Kings Lesson 17

I Kings Chapter 17

*Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies*

*Website: [www.KjvBibleStudies.net](http://www.KjvBibleStudies.net)*

*E-mail: [mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com](mailto:mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com)*

Memory verses for this week: **Php 3:10** That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; **Php 3:11** If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

**Introduction:** In chapter 16, we studied about the ongoing succession of Kings on both the Northern and Southern divisions of Israel. Elah replaced Baasha in the northern kingdom while one of the good kings, Asa, came into power in Judah. We covered several others who ruled in the Northern Kingdom and closed with Ahab taking power.

Each one got progressively worse and more evil. The great wickedness and deep apostasy of the day is revealed in chapter 16:30-33. Ahab not only walked in the sins of Jeroboam, but “he took to wife Jezebel.” Because of his marriage, Ahab served Baal and established Baal worship in the land of Israel. He and Jezebel together were the climax of evil, apostasy, and opposition to God.

### I. Elijah's Message to Wicked King Ahab

**1Ki 17:1** *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.*

However, the wickedness of man is not greater than the righteousness of God. Elijah, who emerges from obscurity, is God’s man of the hour to oppose King Ahab and Jezebel. Elijah was a man of courage: he withstood King Ahab and rebuked him face to face. He faced down the 450 prophets of Baal and each of the captains of fifty sent to fetch him. But his courage would melt away at the threat from Jezebel.

God spoke directly to Elijah, and Elijah spoke the Word of God to kings. While he didn’t write any of the books of the Bible, he did write a letter of rebuke to a king of Judah. He had the power to perform miracles; he appeared with Moses at the transfiguration of Christ; he was carried by a whirlwind into heaven.

Elijah is promised to return to this earth “before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.” He will likely be one of the two witnesses in the tribulation period who perform miracles and oppose the Antichrist.

Verse 1 tells us Elijah came from Gilead which was on the eastern side of the Jordan River. His name means “My God is Jehovah.” Perhaps his name is an indication of Godly parents. Tishbite refers to his hometown; there was a Tishbe in Galilee, although this probably has no connection to Elijah.

Elijah had power from God. He had the Word of the Lord. (according to verses 2,8,24). We are commanded to take the word of God and use it as the sword of the Spirit in Ephesians.

*Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

*Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Elijah also had the power of prayer. As a man of faith, he prayed under the leadership of God. We need to ask God to give us faith like this man that our prayers be not hindered and we would have great power in our relationship with the Lord.

*James 5:17-18 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.*

As a faithful servant, he stood in the presence of his God. “Before whom I stand.” Elijah was like Nehemiah, the King’s cupbearer, who stood before his king, served his king, and heard the words of his king.

*1Ki 17:2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,  
1Ki 17:3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.*

God sent Elijah with a message to King Ahab. It was a message of due judgment.

*Deuteronomy 11:16-17 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; And then the LORD’S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.*

This was a challenge to Ahab’s and Jezebel’s gods. Baal worship had many local gods. Supposedly powerful little 'g' gods of rain and of harvest which would have been necessities to the people.

God's command for Elijah came in verse 2. The exact location of the brook Cherith is unknown. Why was Elijah to hide himself? We see this in I Kings 18:10.

*1Ki 18:10 As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither 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.*

Sometimes God would have us to stand, other times He would have us to flee. There is a time for all things we are told in Ecclesiastes Chapter 3.

*Matthew 10:23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.*

Albert Barnes said this in his New Testament Commentary.

They were not permitted to throw away their lives. Where they could preserve them, without denying their Lord, they were to do it. Yet all the commands of Christ, as well as their conduct, show that they were rather to lay down their lives than deny their Saviour. We are to preserve our lives by all proper means; but rather die than save ourselves by doing anything wrong.

Paul was let down by the wall in a basket by night to avoid the plot of the Jews.

*Acts 17:10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea.*

There is no shame in fleeing persecution; our problem is that we tend to instead flee from the service of God.

*2 Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

*1Ki 17:4 And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.*

*1Ki 17:5 So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.*

God promises to watch over Elijah there in verse 4. A "drouth" means a lack of both water and food. God promises to provide for Elijah by the water in the brook and the ravens would bring him his daily food.

*Psalms 17:3, 25 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*

We don't see any doubts or arguments about things. Elijah just shows faithful

obedience to God. I don't think there is anything in this life that pleases the Lord more than for us to be obedient to His commands.

*1Ki 17:6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.*

*1Ki 17:7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.*

As promised, each day the ravens came and brought food to him. God was faithful to provide for Elijah. He will certainly do the same for your and me.

*Luk 12:22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.*

*Luk 12:23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.*

***Luk 12:24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?***

*Luk 12:25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?*

*Luk 12:26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?*

*Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.*

Later God tests the faithfulness of Elijah. Sometimes our brook may dry up, but we know who it is that provides for us. Job had the ultimate confidence in the Lord.

*Job 13:15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Charles Stanley said this about trials and circumstances in our life.

Our problems may stay, our circumstances may remain, but we know God is in control. We are focused on His adequacy, not our inadequacy.

Brother Taylor preached on this next verse last week. David wanted the Lord to try his heart and prove him.

*Psalms 26:2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.*

When the brook dries up, God will provide another method.

Dave Ramsey said this about the provision God makes for us.

God gives every bird its food, but He does not throw it into the nest.

John Gill said this about the raven's feeding Elijah.

### **1 Kings 17:6**

**And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening,....** For his breakfast and supper, the two principal meals then in use; and as there were several employed, they could bring a sufficiency in a short time for each meal; and these provisions were ready prepared, the bread made and baked, and the flesh boiled, broiled, or roasted; from whence they had it need not be inquired after; the Jews say they were fetched from Ahab's table, and others from Jehoshaphat's, and others, as probable as any, from the tables of the 7000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal:

**and he drank of the brook;** at his meals.

## **II. Elijah's Message to the Widow of Zarephath**

*1Ki 17:8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,*

*1Ki 17:9 Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.*

*1Ki 17:10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.*

*1Ki 17:11 And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.*

God gives a command to Elijah. He had commanded a widow woman there to take care of the prophet. Notice that Elijah is sent to Jezebel's homeland, where her father is king. This is the heartland of Jezebel's religion. Also, Elijah is sent to an impoverished Zidonian widow on the brink of starvation. Now God owns all things. Why would he send him here? I think it was a test of faith, not only by Elijah but also for the widow woman. Can you imagine how this lady must have felt when the Lord tells her to feed a prophet, and she is at the end of her provisions.

Elijah is again obedient to God's command. He didn't bargain or argue with God, he just obediently got up from the dry brook and heads to the land where he was in greatest danger. God is faithful in His promise, "Behold, the widow woman was there." Has God ever directed us some place and left us without help. I can say without a doubt that when I've been in God's will, EVERYTIME he has provided what I needed. In verse 10, we see Elijah's needful pleas. He does not ask for a lot, just a little water and a morsel of bread.

*1Ki 17:12 And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.*

*1Ki 17:13 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.*

*1Ki 17:14 For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.*

*1Ki 17:15 And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.*

*1Ki 17:16 And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.*

The widow explains her desperate plight. She is honestly out of food and all provisions, and was about to make her last meal that she and her son might eat and then die. Elijah makes a strange preference there in verse 13. Here the widow woman is tested: will she serve God or serve herself?

*Mat 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?*

*Mat 6:32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*

*Mat 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

*Mat 6:34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

God makes a blessed promise. He says by obedience the barrel of meal will not waste nor the cruse of oil fail until the Lord sends rain. What a blessed promise.

And as promised, we see God's gracious provision. The widow woman believes the promise of God, and naturally God is faithful to His Word. I can't tell you how many times in my life when Satan would tell me I didn't have enough to pay my tithe, but when I did it, He miraculously worked things out. Things that should have broke stayed together, and perhaps money arrived from an unexpected source. Never doubt the Lord.

***Mal 3:10*** *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

### **III. The Widow Woman's Message to Elijah**

*1Ki 17:17 And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.*

*1Ki 17:18 And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?*

God gives a test to the widow woman. It was no small test. To have the chance

of losing a child is perhaps one of the greatest things any of us can face. We know Job was severely tested, yet Job stood faithful. He lost all that he had, children and possessions, but he never lost his faith. Paul had his “thorn in the flesh” as well as his persecutions, yet Paul stood faithful. We don't know when, but you can be sure your faith will be tested. The weakness of her is faith exposed. She seems to feel Elijah is somehow responsible for the condition that her son was in.

#### F. C. Cook said this in his Bible Commentary

“The woman imagines that Elijah’s visit had drawn God’s attention to her, and so to her sins, which (she feels) deserve a judgment, the probable death of her son.”

When we are tested, it is for our benefit. God already knows if we will be faithful or not, but the trials let us find out how strong we really are. Our trials are intended to improve us, by causing us to draw closer to God and to place our faith in Him (among other reasons).

*1Ki 17:19 And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.*

*1Ki 17:20 And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?*

*1Ki 17:21 And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.*

Elijah prays a prayer of faith. He takes the child and placed him on how own bed and cries unto the Lord. It is unlikely that Elijah is chiding with the Lord over the widow’s loss, but rather is seeking to know if it is truly God’s purpose that this trial should stand as it is. Sometimes Romans 8:28 is a verse that is hard to understand, but we know all things work to our good, no matter how bad the testing or the trial.

By faith, Elijah is confident that God has an even greater purpose here. Three times stretched upon the child reminds us of Christ’s resurrection. Christ was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

*1Ki 17:22 And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.*

*1Ki 17:23 And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.*

*1Ki 17:24 And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.*

We see that the prayers reached the throne of God and there were great results

to this great trial. The child is restored to life by the power of God. Elijah takes the child and takes him to his mother. So the Child is restored to the mother by the servant of God. By the trial, the widow's faith is increased and now she is confident in the God of Elijah. This may have even been the profession of her saving faith. Like Job, no matter what we face, we need to trust the Lord in it all.

\* Additional Comments added by E.L. Bynum in Jan. 2014

*KJV Bible Studies are prepared and distributed free of charge. The lessons may not be sold without consent. If you have questions or wish to discuss the lessons, or possibly need help in finding Jesus Christ as your Personal Lord and Savior, contact us at the email below.*

*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

*Website:* [www.KjvBibleStudies.net](http://www.KjvBibleStudies.net)

*E-mail:* [mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com](mailto:mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com)

**Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.**