

# A FAMINE, A FEMALE (AND) THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

(How God Proves Himself To Those Who Put Him First)  
I Kings 17:9-16



## THE MEAL WASTED NOT!

- ◆ The Land
- ◆ The Lady
- ◆ The Lord

*“Fear not, go and do as you have said, but make me a little cake first, and bring it unto me” (I Kings 17:13)*

Bill Kirk

# "A FAMINE, A FEMALE AND THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD"

**Text:** I Kings 17:1-16  
**Subject:** What Happens In Your Life When You Put God First

## Introduction

### (My Text Is Verse 13 – God's Principle)

"And Elijah said unto her, "Fear not", go and do as thou has said; but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son".

### (Verse 14 – Is God's Promise)

"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".

### (Verse 15 – God's Provision)

"And she and her house did eat many days".

**Question:** What is God talking about here?

**Answer:** He is talking about "First Place" Christians.

- ◆ How God wants to be "First Place" in everything.
- ◆ How God proves Himself to "First Place" believers.
- ◆ How God responds where He is given "First Place".
- ◆ How God honors you (and removes every fear) when you seek **first His Kingdom**.

### (Grasp The Setting Of Our Text)

1. Saul, David and Solomon have ruled Israel for 120 years of growth and splendor.
2. After Solomon's death, his son took action which divided his nation.
3. His son, which was greedy for power and wealth had an arch rival in the North. (Jeroboam)
4. Jeroboam was the first of nineteen wicked kings to rule before Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.

### (The 7 Kings Leading Up to Elijah's Appearance Were:)

1. Jeroboam (931-910 B.C.) His 21 year reign was marked by idolatry, deception, murder and pagan worship.
2. Nadab (910-909 B.C.) His two year reign was a carbon copy of his father, Jeroboam.
3. Baasha (909-886 B.C.) His 24 Year reign was marked by his murdering of everyone in the household of Jeroboam.
4. Elah (886-885 B.C.) His 2 year reign was ended as he was murdered while drunk at Tirzah.
5. Zimri (885 B.C.) His 7 day reign was cut off as Omri invaded Tirzah, and Zimri set fire to the king's house and he burned with the structure.
6. Omri (885-874 B.C.) His 9 year reign saw him build a new capital in Samaria to rule from; his ungodly rule ended with his son (Ahab) taking over his throne.
7. Ahab (874-853 B.C.) His 21 year evil reign was marked by the following:
  - ◆ Ahab married Jezebel (an unlawful marriage according to the Mosaic Law).
  - ◆ Ahab accepted Jezebel's god (Baal was the deity of the Canaanite pantheon which was supposed to have controlled both rain and fertility).
  - ◆ Ahab worshipped this pagan god Baal and constructed a "House of Baal" in Samaria.
  - ◆ Ahab's wickedness was greater than all of his predecessors.

**(I Kings 16:33 Says:)**

“And Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger, than all the kings that were before him”.

**Question:** Who was Elijah?

- #1. Elijah was born around 900 B.C. in the village of Tishbe.
- #2. Tishbe was located in the mountains of Gilead.
- #3. Elijah was from a people group that lived in the rugged, open-air environment.

**(But Most Of All)**

◆ Elijah dared to stand before king Ahab and pronounce the judgment of God.

**Question:** What did Elijah pronounce?

**Answer:** He pronounced in I Kings 17:1, that there would be no rain or dew for years to come.

**Question:** What was the result of Elijah's boldness?

**Answer:** Ahab's wicked wife Jezebel would seek to kill the prophet of God.

**(And Elijah would encounter 4 major disappointments)**

- #1. In Cherith, (the water would dry up).
- #2. In Zarephath, (the widow's son would die).
- #3. In Carmel, (the wait for rain in prayer).
- #4. In Beersheba, (the wilderness season of depression).

**(In Other Words)**

**(During His “Boot-Camp Training” From God)**

- #1. Elijah faced an **unexpected disappointment** in Cherith. (Some of you have been there).
- #2. Elijah was **misunderstood** in Zarephath. (Some of you have been there).
- #3. Elijah was **put on hold** while praying in Carmel. (Some of you have been there).
- #4. Elijah was **extremely depressed** in Beersheba. (Some of you have been there).

◆ And it was during this process of training that God tells Elijah in I Kings 17:9:

“Arise and go to Zarephath and dwell there, for I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain you”.

**Question:** Why was it illogical to go to Zarephath?

**Question:** Why trust a poor widow to provide for you?

**Question:** Why ask a widow for her last meal?

**Question:** Why does obedience always precede blessing?

**Question:** And what's the message of the Lord to our hearts?

**(Today)**

◆ The Famine, The Female and The Faithfulness of God.

**(Or, What Happens When You Put God First In Your Life?)**

## I. The Famine Of The Land

**Question:** What happened to Elijah in the perfect will of God?

**Answer:** In (verse 7), "And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain".

(In Other Words)

◆ Just as Elijah had prophesied in (verse 1), no rain, causes the brook to dry up.

**Question:** Was Elijah forgotten in Cherith? (No)

**Answer:** In (verse 8), "And the Word of the Lord came unto him saying, arise and go to Zarephath, for behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to Zarephath".

(In Plain Vanilla Elijah)

- ◆ "Go to Zarephath which is 100 miles from Cherith".
- ◆ "Travel to Jezebels homeland".
- ◆ "You're going to a heathen country that worships Baal".

(And By The Way Elijah)

◆ "You're going to a land where the drought is so severe, the villagers of Zarephath are near death".

(But Don't Worry Elijah)

- ◆ "Because in the land of famine (100 miles away)...
- ◆ ... There is going to be a poor penniless widow to take care of you in the drought-stricken territory".

**Question:** How many of you have ever wondered, if you've really heard from God or not?

**Question:** How many of you have ever questioned the ways of the Lord?

**Question:** How many of you have ever been tempted to worry or ask, how is God going to answer this prayer?

**Question:** How many of you have ever had to travel a hard path, where faith in God was the only anchor of your soul?

(Beloved, You're On A Boat With Many Passengers)

## II. The Female For The Miracle

**Question:** What happened when Elijah obeyed the Lord and went to Zarephath?

**Answer:** (Verse 10 is incredible insight)

"So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering sticks".

**Question:** What's the message here?

**Answer:** That God is always working at both ends of your journey.

(On One Hand...)

◆ ...We are responsible to just obey the Lord in the present,

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**(On The Other Hand...)**

- ◆ ...God is responsible to keep His Word to us down the road.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ God told Elijah, the woman would be there,
- ◆ And when Elijah went there, the woman was there!

**Question:** What was the widow doing?

**Answer:** (Verse 12B), "Behold, (she said) 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".

**(In Other Words)**

- #1. She is gathering sticks to make a fire.
- #2. She is preparing a meal for herself and her son.
- #3. She has accepted the fact that she and her son are going to die of starvation.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Elijah is being tested by her lack of supply!
- ◆ Elijah is being tested by her lack of hope!
- ◆ Elijah is being tested by what he visibly sees!

**Question:** Do we walk by faith, or do we walk by sight?

**Question:** How many of you have ever been overwhelmed by a surprise or a circumstance?

**Question:** What's the message to your heart and mine?

**III. The Faithfulness Of God**

**Question:** How does God provide at the home of a widow, in Jezebel's back yard?

- ◆ In (verse 10), Elijah asks for a drink of water,
- ◆ In (verse 11), Elijah then asks for something to eat,
- ◆ In (verse 12), The widow admits she is destitute, about to die, and only possesses a handful of meal and a little oil.
- ◆ In (verse 13), Elijah seems to speak illogical words; "Fear not, go do what you have said, but make me thereof a little cake first".

(Verse 14), "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail".

(Verse 15), "And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah".

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ She's a widow!
- ◆ She has a child! (Single parent)
- ◆ She is poor!
- ◆ She is hopeless (preparing to die)!

**(And Elijah Has The Nerve To Say:)**

**"Make Me A Little Cake First"**

**(Which Means:)**

- ◆ Trust the Lord on this one, for the Lord wants to prove Himself to you.
- ◆ It's God's Word to you today.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Elijah isn't being selfish, (he's heard from God).
- ◆ Elijah knows that God will reveal Himself to those who give Him **first place!**

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Its not what you see or have in **your hands.**
- ◆ Its what God sees, and has in **His hands.**

**Question:** What does God do for those who live with the supremacy of God in every area of their life?

(Verse 15), "She obeyed the Lord and her house did eat many days".

(Verse 16), "And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the Word of the Lord".

**(It's Simple)**

- ◆ Her circumstances did not diminish the character of God.
- ◆ Her circumstances did not change the faithfulness of God.
- ◆ Her circumstances did not exhaust the supply of the Lord. (And)
- ◆ Her obedience was the key to unlock the door of heaven.

**Question:** What's the message and application to the widow, Elijah and you and me?

- #1. God brings life out of death to those who believe the promises of God!
- #2. When we give God first place, God removes our fears and shows himself strong.
- #3. When you walk by faith, God will always supply exactly what is needed.
- #4. God may stretch you to your limit, but His purpose is to do the impossible.
- #5. You may sometimes feel overwhelmed and at the breaking point, but you will never be tested beyond what you can bear.
- #6. What seems like a tragedy to you, has an unseen eternal purpose for the Lord.
- #7. God's promises often hinge on our obedience to His perfect will.

**Altar Call**

- ◆ Need forgiveness? (God's grace is greater than your sins are sinful)
- ◆ Need healing? (God's gift of healing is more than your illness in your body)
- ◆ Need change? (God's power over sin is greater than the power of sin)
- ◆ Need joy? (God's peace will chase you down if your obedience is in place)

**AMEN!**  
Bill Kirk, Pastor

**THE TASK AHEAD OF YOU IS NEVER AS GREAT AS THE POWER BEHIND YOU!**