

Elijah – A Man Like Us?

Jas. 5:16-18



Jas. 5:16 Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. **The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**

17 **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.

18 And **he prayed again**, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

We have a tendency to look at a person like Elijah as though he is in a different spiritual class than we are, yet the Bible indicates that he was like you and me. The Greek word used here is as follows:

Original Word: ὁμοιοπαθής

Transliteration: homoiopathés

Definition: of like feelings or affections

Usage: of like feelings, having similar passions and feelings, of like infirmities. (**like passions**) <https://biblehub.com/greek/3663.htm>

Acts 14:15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? **We also are men of like passions with you**, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

In James 5:16b, the Bible makes a strong declaration – “...**The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**” To teach us the power of prayer and its availability to us, the example of Elijah is given that “he prayed earnestly,” encouraging us to have faith and confidence when we pray.

Jas. 5:17 “**Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are...**”

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

8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

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

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.

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.

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.**

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.**

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.

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

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.

I. THE UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT

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

A. The Loss of Resources – “...the brook dried up...”

Jas. 5:17 “**Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are...**”

B. The Location of Replenishment

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

8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

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

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.

1. The Command – v. 9 “Arise, get thee to Zarephath...and well **there**...”

- When the Lord sent Elijah to hide at the brook Cherith, He said that He would feed him **THERE**.
- When the Lord told Elijah to go to Zarephath, He said to “...dwell **there**...”

Ezek. 48:35 *It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, **The LORD is there.***

יְהוָה שָׁמָּה

Jehovah-shammah = "Jehovah is there"

2. The Compliance – v. 10 “So he arose and went to Zarephath...”

- We enjoy the blessings of God when we obey Him and follow His will for our lives.

Prov. 3:5 **Trust in the LORD** with **all thine heart**; and **lean not unto thine own understanding.**

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and **he shall direct thy paths.**

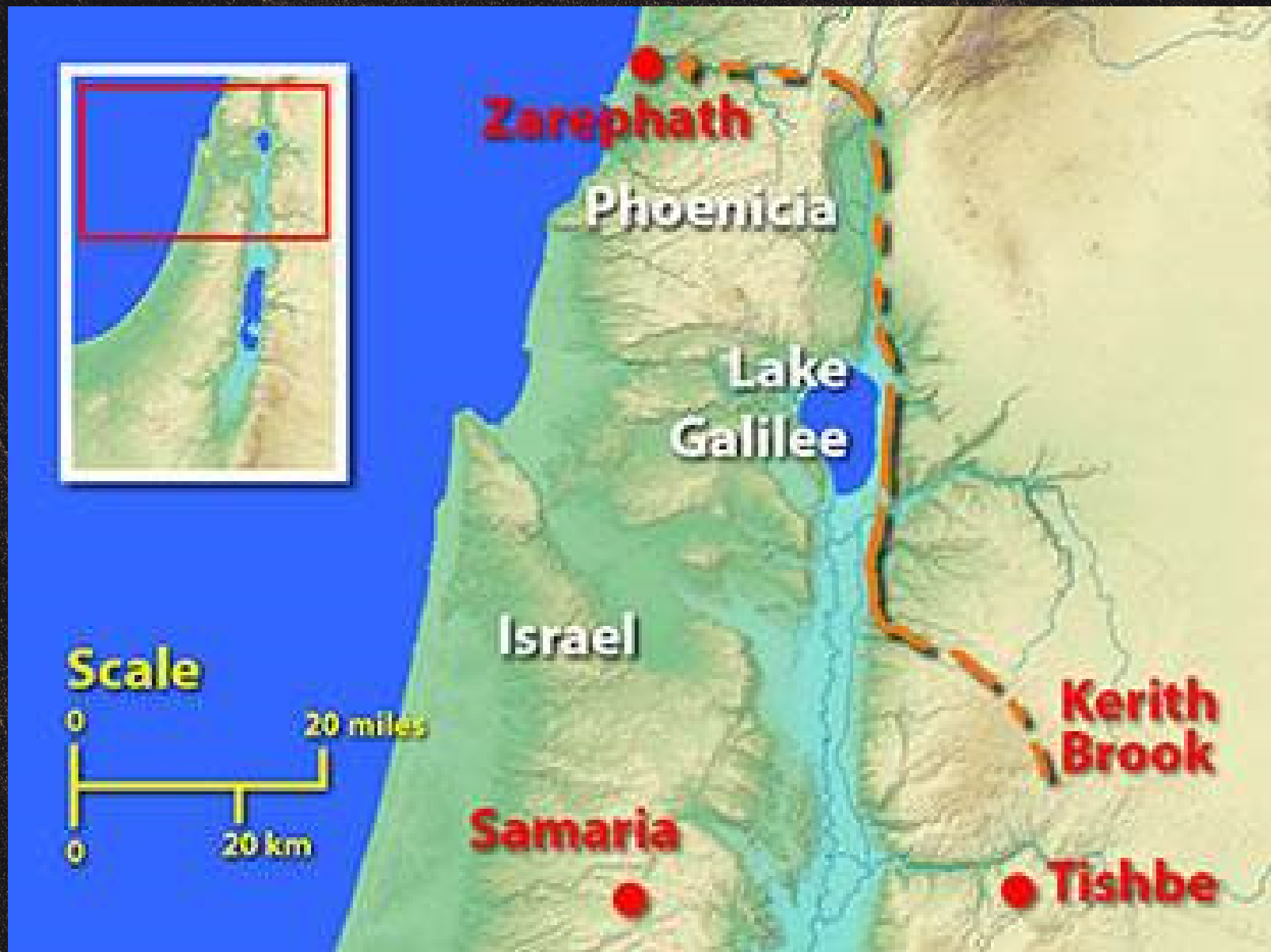
- Elijah learned how to be “cut off” from all everything while at Cherith, humbling waiting on the Lord to provide and protect him.

- The Lord led Elijah to Zarephath to learn more life-lessons in his fellowship with the Lord.

Jas. 5:17 “**Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are...**”

3. The Complication – v. 9

1 Kings 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.



- The journey to Zarephath from Cherith was 85-100 miles, taking several days during the famine.
- The Lord led Elijah straight into Jezebel's homeland – "...*belongeth* to Zidon..."

1 Kings 16:31 And it came to pass, **as if it had been a light thing** for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that **he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.**

32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

33 And Ahab made a grove; and **Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.**

- Elijah was now to be dependent upon a poor widow for his preservation.

Jas. 5:17 **"Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are..."**

II. THE UNEXPLAINABLE DEMAND

1 Kings 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.

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.

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.**

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.**

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.

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

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.

A. The Providential Resource – “...behold, the widow woman was **there**...”

B. The Provision Requested – “...Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.”

- There was a famine and Elijah had just made a long, trying journey. He was thirsty.
- Elijah interrupted the widow’s gracious quest to include something to eat:

1 Kings 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.

C. The Practical Response

1 Kings 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.**

- The widow recognized Elijah and his God – “...As the LORD **thy** God liveth...”
- The widow expressed her despair = my son and I are ready to die – “**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.**”
- Elijah calmed her fears, then directed her to feed him, first.

1 Kings 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.**

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.

- Elijah explained that her obedience would be honored by his God.

Jas. 5:17 **“Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are...”**

III. THE UNENDING DELIGHTS

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

A. The Faith Exercised – “And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah...”

- The Lord used Elijah to bless what the widow had in her possession.
- The Lord uses the same principle for us, today.

2 Cor. 8:11 Now therefore **perform the doing of it**; that as *there was* **a readiness to will, so there may be a performance** also **out of that which ye have**.

12 For if there be **first a willing mind**, *it is* accepted **according to that a man hath**, *and* not according to that he hath not.

B. The Food Experienced – “...and she, and he, and her house, **did eat many days**.”

C. The Fellowship Enjoyed – “...and she, and he, and her house...”

D. The Faithfulness Expressed, v. 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.

Zarephath = "crucible, melting" = refinery

- To fertilize the soil of our faith, trials are sprinkled upon us throughout our lifetime.

1 Pet. 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to **try** you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

Jas. 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers **temptations**;

12 Blessed is the man that endureth **temptation**: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which **the Lord hath promised to them that love him.**

- We mature in our faith and realize that such painful experiences result in the growth and development of our faith.

Prov. 17:3 The fining pot *is* for silver, and the furnace for gold: but **the LORD trieth the hearts.**

1 Thess 2:4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but **God, which trieth our hearts.**

1 Pet. 1:6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold **temptations:**

7 That **the trial of your faith**, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, **might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**

Jas. 5:17 **“Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are...”**

E. The Forfeit Explained

Luke 4:25 But I tell you of a truth, **many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months**, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But **unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow.**

Jas. 5:17 **“Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are...”**

Conclusion

Elijah was experiencing “life lessons” from the Lord.

- The brook dried up, then the Lord directed Elijah to the widow in Zarephath.
- After being “cut off,” Elijah was sent to the "refinery.”
- The Lord worked in miraculous ways to provide for the widow, who provided for Elijah.
- Many forfeited the blessings of God while the widow and her son had plenty.

Heb. 12:14 **Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness**, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled;

16 Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

17 For ye know how that afterward, **when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.**

Jas. 5:17 **“Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are...”**