

1 Kings 17:8-16 “LITTLE IS MUCH WHEN GOD IS IN IT”

INTRO: Turn your Bibles or turn them on to 1 Kings 17. 1 Kings is found about a third of the way into the Old Testament. It comes after 1 & 2 Samuel, and before 2 Kings, of course, and 1 & 2 Chronicles. And that's all the 1st & 2nd books in the O.T. They are all together.

BACKSTORY: Elijah comes on the scene of scripture here in 1 Kings 17. He's quiet the character. He's large and in charge. He has a big personality. He's a profit of God, sent to the people of God, with a message from God, during a time that almost all God's people have turned their backs on God.

Ahab is King of Israel at this time. He's a bad King who has led the people away from the worship of the one true God. Israel, because of Jezebel, Ahab's wife, is now worshipping Baal. And God is displeased. So God sends Elijah into the palace of Ahab with a message. "There will be no more rain, not even dew on the earth, until I give the command". After the message, Elijah walks out and God says to him, you need to go hide. Ahab is going to try to kill you. But don't be afraid, just go to the brook Cherith beyond Jordan and stay there. I will send ravens to feed you in the morning and evenings and you can drink from the brook. But then in v 7 the Word of God says, "And it came to pass after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land."

That brings us to our text for today, read with me...

1 Kings 17: 8-16 "Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 9 "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you." 10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink." 11 And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." 12 So she said, "As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a barrel, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die." 13 And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. 14 For thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'The barrel of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.'" 15 So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. 16 The barrel of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah."

Today I want to talk to you about this widow of Zarephath, we don't even know her name, and how God did a miraculous work in her life.

Today I'm preaching on the subject, "Little Is Much When God Is In It". And hopefully that will be true of this sermon too :)

Notice this widow, she had...

I) A LITTLE CALLING: vv 8-11 "So (Elijah) arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink." 11 And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."

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Her calling came from God. And apparently it was for one person and one purpose. You don't have to be Billy Graham to have a call from God. Your calling may be to faithfulness, or to pray for others...maybe your preacher, yeah, do that. You may think your calling is insignificant, but it's great if God is in it!

Notice secondly, she had...

II) A LITTLE HOPE: v 12 “So she said, “As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a barrel, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.”

A LITTLE Hope, that's all she had...very little. You can hear the sorrow in her voice.

We live in a day of little to no hope for many. But for those who put their trust in the Lord, there is always hope.

Jeremiah 17:7 “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord.”

Then lastly, she had...

III) A LITTLE FAITH: vv 13-16 “And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. 14 For thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘The barrel of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.’ ” 15 So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. 16 The barrel of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.”

She was afraid! That proves she had but very little faith. But a little faith goes a long ways when God is in it. HER FAITH WAS IN GOD! When Elijah told her to make the cake, she refused (vv 11-12). But at the Word of the Lord, SHE TRUSTED (v 14).

Matthew 17:20 “...Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

Ephesians 2:8 “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.”

CONCLUSION: