

<p>Think It Over Going Deeper Devotional</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">HOPE IS ALL WE NEED Pt2 Hope Rises Us up!</p> <p><i>1 Kings 17:1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."</i></p> <p>12-6-20</p>
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The message "Hope is All We Need" is a two-part series so if you use the devotional from last week, you can start on number three, but if you missed it last week, you can start on number one. My prayer is that your devotion and love for Jesus deepens.

Why does God allow shortages in our lives? We all ask that question when we're facing hard times. The answer is that God is all we need--but we don't know that until God is all we've got. In this lesson on hope, we're going to look at three incidents from the life of Elijah, a prophet of God who lived around 900 B.C.

His story is found in 1 Kings, during a time when the northern kingdom of Israel was in serious decline. The government was bankrupt and the entire nation was in recession. After a long run of bad leaders, they were now being ruled by the worst of all: King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. God sent Elijah to confront Ahab, which is what we read in the verse above. Naturally, this message enraged Ahab and Jezebel who put out a contract to have Elijah killed. What did God Do? He sent Elijah on a three-part adventure in learning that God was all he needed.

Open in prayer.

1. Kerith: a time of OBSCURITY.

*1 Kings 17:2-7 - Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: 3 "Leave here, turn eastward and **hide in the Kerith Ravine**, east of the Jordan. 4 You will drink from the brook, and I have ordered the ravens to feed you there." 5 **So he did what the Lord had told him.** He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening., and he drank from the brook. 7 Sometime later the Brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land.*

Read 1 Kings 17:2-7.

Who led Elijah into this ravine in the first place? _____

How did God miraculously provide food and water? _____

After Elijah had lived there a while, what happened to God's provision? _____

What to remember:

When we find ourselves in a deep rut in our lives, there are three things to remember:

1. I'm in a rut... to keep me from depending on what has sustained me in the past (in Elijah's case: Kerith).
2. I'm in a rut... to move me to a better place.
3. I'm in a rut... to prove God hasn't forgotten me.

Kerith means "cut off." Elijah was stuck in a deep rut, all by himself and cut off from support from family and friends. Have you ever been in a deep valley like this? _____ What did you learn from it? _____

Why does God lead us into dry seasons? _____

Think of an example from your life when you thought all the good in your life had disappeared. _____

What happened? _____

What good came out of it? _____

It can be scary when we have all the props knocked away from our lives. Think of Elijah's story and how dependent he must have become on the birds who fed him and the brook that sustained him. What birds and brooks are you depending on? _____

As a deliberate act, take a moment to relinquish to God those things you are depending on right now to get you through. As you do, thank him for being your source. _____

2. The journey: a time of INSECURITY.

1 Kings 17:8-10 - Then the word of the Lord came to him: 9 "Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food." 10 So he went to Zarephath.

What did God tell Elijah to do? _____

What did He promise? _____

What was Elijah's response? _____

What to remember:

... When you're on a journey that scares you to death:

1. The path to a miracle is always through uncomfortable territory.
2. The source of a miracle is always unexpected.
3. The pattern of a miracle is always: command-promise-risk.

Think of how the steps of CPR--command, promise, and risk--are seen in 1 Kings 17:8-9a.

When we're on a journey we often try to figure out the "whys" of God's plan for us. Sound familiar? Does this help in the journey? _____ Why or why not? _____

Why do you think the path to a miracle is so uncomfortable and unexpected? _____

3. Zarephath: A Time of Scarcity

1 Kings 17:9-16 - "Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food." 10 So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?" 11 As she was going to get it, he called, "And bring me, please, a piece of bread." 12 "As surely as the Lord your God lives," she replied, "I don't have any bread--only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it--and die." 13 Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. 14 For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord gives rain on the land.'" 15 She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. 16 For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

What to remember:

... when you run out of resources:

1. Whatever I need more of--give all I have to God. Think of a time when you were running really low or out of something. _____

2. Whatever I have the least of--give to God. What is it that you have the least of: money? energy? time? _____

This might be the hardest of all of them: Are you able to give that to the Lord, if not, why not?

3. I don't give to get a blessing; I give to be a blessing. How could the wrong attitude short-circuit the blessings from God? _____

How does Elijah use what God has shown him--command, promise, and risk--with the widow?

When you read 1 Kings 17:9b- 16, how long do you think it was until God sent rain to the land?

It was actually two and a half years before the rain arrived. Think of an example of someone waiting a long time before they received God's promises. _____

Did their faith grow because of it? _____ If so, how? _____

Zarephath means "refinery." A refinery was a place where metals were shaped and formed. How do times of scarcity refine us? _____

Is the refinement worth the hardship? _____

Think of a time when you went through "the refinery." What was the outcome spiritually in your life?

When we're already facing a shortage, why should we give what little we have to God? _____

How do we give these resources to God? _____

Which of these stages are you in right now--obscurity, insecurity, or scarcity? Or all three?

In these times we worship Gods by obeying His commands, believing His promises, and stepping out to take the risk. In the process, we will grow in our faith. Think of which of these you're experiencing right now. _____

Which steps can you take individually to help you through these seasons? _____

Personal Application and Commitment:

Philippians 4:19 - My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Lessons for Hopeless Times

While He may not ask you to live in a ravine for a year, send you into enemy-occupied territory with a bounty on your head, or ask you to depend on a poor widow for your sustenance, God wants you to learn to rely on Him in your time of need, just as Elijah did. What are you lacking today? Resources? Relationships? Results? Revenue? Whatever it is, God wants you to learn these four things:

1. GOD IS ALL I NEED. Draw close to Him and let Him be your supply.
2. WHERE GOD GUIDES, HE PROVIDES. His direction includes His provision.
3. I MUST TRUST HIM ONE DAY AT A TIME. He promises us what we need when we need it.
4. GOD'S PROMISES HINGE ON MY OBEDIENCE. Remember CPR: Command, Promise, Risk.

God has promised to meet all your needs. Do you believe Him? Take a few moments to think of where you need a miracle right now. Or, encourage someone you know with a time God has worked a miracle in your life. What step of obedience will you take this week to trust God's promise for you? _____
