

The Prophet Elijah

1 Kings 16:29 - 17:24

Have you ever had to tell someone God's Word to correct him when he was caught up in sin?
What are two ways the person caught in sin might react to you bringing him God's Word?
Think about this as you study how Elijah confronted King Ahab with his sin of idolatry.



Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, You have given us so freely of Your Son to take away our sins. Help us to give freely and generously to those in need and in our offerings at church. Help them to be gifts of love. Please give us the faith to trust that You will provide for all of our needs. Amen.

The Story

In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. {30} Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. {31} And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. {32} Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. {33} And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

{34} In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, according to the word of the LORD, which He had spoken

through Joshua the son of Nun.

(1 Kings 17) And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word."

{2} Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, {3} "Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. {4} "And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."

{5} So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. {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} And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. {8} 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 bin, 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 bin 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 bin 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.

{17} Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. {18} So she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?"

{19} And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. {20} Then he cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" {21} And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him."

{22} Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. {23} And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!"

{24} Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth."

Outer aim – God provides for all of Elijah, the widow and her family's bodily and spiritual needs.

What the Story Tells Us - Discuss your answers.

1. Who was trying to stamp out the worship of the true God? (1 Kings 18:4)
2. What did King Ahab do to establish the worship of Baal and Asherah in his land?(1 K. 16:31-33)
3. What lesson did King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, and the other people of Israel need to learn? How did God try to teach them that lesson?

4. God had two ways to try to teach them to worship the true God - He sent Elijah to speak God's Word and He sent troubles (drought in this case). Did King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, and the people of Israel learn their lesson from God?
5. This is one way people might react to God's correction. They reject God's Word and God's will for their lives with rebellious hearts and thereby actually harden their own hearts against God and His Word. Who sent Elijah to speak to Ahab about his idolatry?
6. Since Ahab was the King, what could Ahab have done to Elijah as an angry response?
7. Do you think Elijah knew this was a possibility before he went to Ahab? How was this a test for Elijah's faith?
8. Did this stop Elijah from going to speak God's Word to Ahab? How did Elijah put God's Kingdom and God's work before his own personal safety?
9. How was Elijah able to do this?
10. Speaking God's Word can be hard to do in the face of persecution. Elijah simply obeyed God's will in this matter and entrusted his life into the hands of the Lord. The widow also needed to learn some spiritual lessons. What does verse 12 tell us the woman thought would happen to her and her son?
11. Basically she thought, "My son and I are going to die. If we share with you we will die faster." Does this attitude show a trust in God? What promise of God's providence did Elijah make in verse 14?
12. Did the woman believe this promise? How do we know?
13. Who had given her the faith to believe this promise?
14. Later, when her son died, the woman thought God was punishing her. What did she believe God was punishing her for? (v. 18)
15. This is a common misconception among many people, "God is punishing me for my sins, that is why God has sent this trouble." Does God ever punish us for our sins? Who was punished in our place for our sins?
16. Trials in life are never a punishment for believers. Jesus was completely punished for our sins on the cross. Then why did God send the problems of drought and death to the widow?

Inner aim – God sends trials and sufferings to test us spiritually, to correct us and to strengthen our faith.

What God's Word Tells Us - Look up the following Scripture references and then discuss the following questions.

James 1:24, Rom. 5:1-4

What should be our attitude when we are confronted by trials?
God sends trials to us as well. What are some trials people your age might face?
What good can come from trials? (See the above passages and also I Pet. 5:10.)

Hebrews 12:1-11

What do trials prove to us regarding our relationship to God? (vv. 6-7)
What do they prove regarding God's feelings toward us? (v. 6)
Who is our perfect example of bearing trials? (vv. 2-3)
What does God accomplish in our hearts through trials? (vv. 10-11)
How should we receive this chastening from God? (v. 9)

Isaiah 53:4-6

Are we being punished for our sins when we suffer trials? (vv. 5-6)
Who bore all the punishment for our sins?

Hebrews 2:18, 4:15

Do we ever suffer alone? Who else is helping us to bear the sorrow of this trial?
How was Christ tempted through His trials? (v. 4:15)
Who perfectly withstood every trial and temptation?
Who can sympathize with us and provide help when we need it?

Romans 8:16-18, 26-39

Who or what can separate us from God's love? (vv. 38-39)
Who helps us in our weakness by praying for us? (vv. 26, 34)
How do all things (even trials) turn out for the Christian? (v. 28)
How can we be conquerors in the midst of trials as verse 37 states?

2 Corinthians 11:23-27

Name some trials St. Paul faced.
Didn't the Apostle Paul already have a strong faith? Why would God send him so many trials? (Hint: 2 Cor. 1:3-11 may help.)

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

Who comforts us in our suffering? (vv. 3-4)
Who comforted Paul in his sufferings?
The Christian Church in Paul's day was suffering much persecution from Jews and government leaders. How could St. Paul use his experiences of suffering to minister to a Church that was suffering persecution?
Let's make up an example. Let's say you have been persecuted (ridiculed, excluded) by peers at school for being a Christian. Where should you look for comfort? How, then, can you comfort another person who is facing similar persecution?

Your Turn - Look up the Scripture references, then pick an answer from the word box below to answer the questions.

deliverance
pray

stop worrying
anxious

thanksgiving
Scripture

Psalm 46:10

What do we need to remember when things seem out of control in our lives? (This answer is not in the word box.)

What do you think it means to "be still"? _____

Psalm 50:15

Instead of worrying, what should we do when we have troubles? _____

What is God's promise in this passage? _____

Romans 15:4

Where will we find the comfort and hope we need? _____

The Psalms are especially full of encouragement for those who are facing trials. See Ps. 25; 27; 46; 85; 86; and many more. See also Is. 12; Is. 43:1-3; Is. 49:15-16.

Philippians 4:6-9

What shouldn't we be? _____

What should we have in our prayers along with requests? _____

What should we be thinking about? _____

(This answer is not in the word box.)

What should we be busy doing? _____

(This answer is not in the word box.)

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

What could we possibly rejoice about and give thanks for during times of trouble? (Answer not found in box.)

Summing it up – During times of trials we should...

Trust God

Stop worrying

Remember Christ's example

Pray

Study God's Word

Give thanks

Let our mind dwell on good things

Be busy doing what is right and good.

Passages

Be still, and know that I am God. Psalm 46:10

Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me. Ps. 50:15

Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.

Deuteronomy 31:6

Hymn - TLH 442 v. 1, 2

Lord of Glory, who hast bo't us
With Thy lifeblood as the price,
Never grudging for the lost ones
That tremendous sacrifice;
And with that has freely given
Blessings countless as the sand
To th' unthankful and the evil
With Thine own unsparing hand.

Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to yield Thee
Gladly, freely, of Thine own;
With the sunshine of Thy goodness
Melt our thankless hearts of stone
Till our cold and selfish natures,
Warmed by Thee, at length believe
That more happy and more blessed
'Tis to give than to receive. Amen

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, When You choose to test us through trials, fill us with Your Spirit so that we do not turn away from You in rebellion. Instead, fill us with comfort from Your Word. Let Christ in His sufferings be our example. As Christ turned to You in prayer for comfort and strength, likewise help us to turn to You in prayer. Let our times of trial be times of faith strengthening for us. We pray that You will help us to use the comfort we receive from Your Word to comfort others in their distress. We thank You for the trials You send because You thereby prove to us Your love for us, and that You have truly made us Your own dear children. Help us to accept Your will for our lives with joy. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.