

# God Will Supply

## FOCUS THOUGHT

God takes care of His people.

## ▶▶ FOCUS VERSE

### I Kings 17:16

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.

## ▶▶ LESSON TEXT

### I Kings 17:1–4; 8–16

1 And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

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

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

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.

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.



## GOD PROVIDES IN EVERY SITUATION

Marcus and Renee Brainos were on their first deputation as UPCI missionaries to France. They had planned to spend part of the winter in Canada and had outfitted their three children with warm outerwear. But Marcus only had an older coat, and Renee did not really have anything warm enough for the trip. The kids were taken care of, so Renee had decided to manage until she could find something without straining their budget.

One Sunday, after ministering at a church in Arkansas, the pastor's wife gave Renee a package from a lady in their church. That morning, as this lady was leaving for church, the Lord spoke to her about a very warm Italian leather coat she had in her closet. "That coat belongs to the wife of the missionary couple at church today. Take it to her."

When Renee was given the coat, she was shocked and then became a little nervous that it would not fit. But she immediately thought, *If God sent this to me, then why would it not fit?* Not only did it fit, but there were also very warm gloves in the pocket. The lady had started to remove them but felt instructed to leave them as well.

God knows our every need and is faithful to provide. Sometimes He asks us to go into situations that require things we do not have, but He knows those needs before we do and already has a plan.



### OUTLINE

#### I. ELIJAH PROPHESED

- A. No Dew or Rain
- B. Sometimes God Gives an Unpopular Word

#### II. ELIJAH AT THE BROOK CHERITH

- A. Ravens Fed Him
- B. The Lord Takes Care of Those Who Trust Him

#### III. WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

- A. Gave Her Last Meal to the Prophet
- B. Meal and Oil Never Ran Out
- C. The Lord Takes Care of Those Who Put Him First

#### IV. GOD WILL SUPPLY

- A. We Must Trust in the Lord
- B. We Must Put God First



### CONTEMPLATING THE TOPIC

On May 25, 1961, United States President John F. Kennedy told Congress of his intentions to send a man to the moon and return him safely to Earth by the end of the decade. The challenge to do such a

thing was monumental since the technology to achieve such a task had not yet been invented. Ultimately, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) would receive billions of dollars in funding to ensure they would have all they needed to achieve the goal of reaching the moon. Though there were tragedies and setbacks along the way, on July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong stepped onto the surface of the moon, successfully completing the challenge that had been set forth.

After President Kennedy's challenge, the US government supplied the needs of NASA. As Christians we often trust God to provide for our needs. Yet some believers feel, at times, that God withholds or does not provide for our needs. Philippians 4:19 states, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." This promise is written and cannot change. Then why do we feel God is not providing for our needs at times? We often experience tragedies and setbacks on the road of life. But through it all, we can trust God will still provide what we need.

## I. ELIJAH PROPHESED

### A. No Dew or Rain

The prophet Elijah boldly stood before King Ahab and delivered a message declaring the judgment of God was going to fall upon Israel. In modern society, standing before a world leader expressing your opinion without fear of retribution seems reasonable. In the days of Elijah, a strongly worded opinion to the ruler of the land could bring swift and brutal punishment, even death. Elijah had the task of telling King Ahab that his nation would suffer from drought, seeing no rain or dew for the foreseeable future. Knowing the king's heart, God gave Elijah personal directions to flee the area after giving the message to the king. Not only did God give Elijah an opportunity to avoid the wrath of Ahab, but God sent Elijah to a place where he would find protection and provision. This mission must have been difficult for Elijah, but his obedience to God gave him the courage to go forward and complete the difficult task he had been given.

### B. Sometimes God Gives an Unpopular Word

Jonah received an unpopular word from God. God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and tell the people to repent or face His wrath. This word did not sit well with Jonah as there was a contentious history between Israel and Nineveh. Instead of going to Nineveh as directed, Jonah went to Joppa and boarded a ship sailing for Tarshish. A storm arose, which caused the ship and crew to be in peril. When Jonah confessed his responsibility, the crew tossed Jonah overboard into the sea. Jonah was swallowed by a great fish, where he spent the next three days and nights. Once Jonah was delivered from the fish, he went straight to Nineveh and completed the task God had originally given him.

Elijah was far more obedient than Jonah. However, this did not make his task any easier. There are times when we as individuals—or as the collective body of Christ—receive an unpopular word from God. Sometimes the Word of God that comes from the pulpit of our local assembly is not popular. In Jonah 4 we see the prophet proclaiming his discontent with the task God had given him. Eventually he submitted to the authority of God and obeyed, just as Elijah had obeyed God.

---

» *How do you handle an unpopular word from God, with compliance or disregard?*

---

## II. ELIJAH AT THE BROOK CHERITH

The expression “God works in mysterious ways” is applicable to Elijah's situation. Why would the God of all things tell His prophet to go and hide by a small creek? Certainly God could destroy or vanquish anyone who stood against His chosen prophet. This situation demonstrates how God operates with divine understanding. The word Elijah received was to tell Ahab about the impending judgment and then

hide at the Brook Cherith. Elijah did not question God. He simply complied with the directive he was given by the Creator.

### **A. Ravens Fed Him**

The irony is thick when looking at the choice God made in the way he would feed Elijah. The raven has long been associated with darkness or evil doings. Many stories and poems have been written using the raven as a symbol of evil or darkness. Most famous in modern times is the poem “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe. It portrays a raven talking to a man distraught at the loss of his love and grappling for sanity. Even more ironic in the case of Elijah is that wild animals, or wild birds in this case, approached a human being to bring him food. Birds are always skittish around humans and other creatures that approach them, and rarely do they feel comfortable approaching humans.

The Bible does not give many details on what happened to Elijah during his stay at the Brook Cherith, only that he was fed by the ravens. Imagine if someone had come across the prophet during his stay at the brook. What would this person have witnessed? Elijah was healthy and vibrant during a time of drought and famine. Even more amazing were the ravens bringing him food. A person who saw ravens as evil creatures might be overcome with fear seeing them freely approaching and bringing food to the prophet. That vision alone could cause men to stay away for fear the prophet held some power over creatures associated with darkness. Yet God used ravens to feed His prophet. With this in mind, we can see some logic in why God would have used this method to care for the man He was protecting. In His own way, God provided both nourishment and protection for Elijah.

---

» *How has God provided for you or others in a manner you could only describe as miraculous?*

---

### **B. The Lord Takes Care of Those Who Trust Him**

Elijah had good reason to trust in the Lord. Not only had the Lord given Elijah direction to hide, but He gave Elijah safe passage and supplied his needs. Further study of the prophet provides numerous examples of the awesome power of God. Elijah was no different than any other human being. He simply obeyed and trusted in the Lord. Only when we trust in God can we be witness to greater miracles. Our trust grows as our relationship with the Lord develops into something more than just the occasional prayer.

David is another good example of a man who trusted God. We see the divine hand of the Lord protecting and providing for David. Each miraculous event in the life of David was greater than the last. These demonstrated how God prepared David for greater challenges and how David was growing in his trust in God. Our trust in God must grow beyond all human reasoning. Our trust in God is not optional. For Him to operate in our lives, we must trust Him and submit to His will. Psalm 9:10 states, “And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.”

### III. WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

Elijah received a word from God commanding him to leave the brook and go to a place called Zarephath. There he would find a widow God had instructed to care for the prophet.

She was a God-fearing woman based on two facts from Scripture. First, God told Elijah He had commanded a widow to take care of him. Only those in relationship with God would likely heed His voice. Secondly, when Elijah asked her for bread, she told him she did not have enough. When the prophet told her the word of the Lord, she immediately left to make him bread. Her obedience demonstrated the depth of her faith.

#### A. Gave Her Last Meal to the Prophet

A closer look at the interaction between the widow and the prophet reveals how our human nature can give us pause when trusting God. The initial request by Elijah was simply for a vessel of water. The widow immediately set out to fulfil his request. As she was walking away, Elijah called out to her and asked that she bring him some bread. This request caused her to hesitate for a moment as she informed Elijah she only had enough meal to make bread for herself and her son. She further stated she had come to gather two sticks in order to prepare the bread “that we may eat it, and die” (1 Kings 17:12). In other words, she had enough meal to make one small morsel of bread; then she and her son would resign themselves to die from starvation. Elijah commanded her to make him some bread first, assuring her God would make sure her barrel would never be empty. In obedience to the word of God, she made the bread.

Hesitation in the face of imminent danger or uncertainty is an instinctive human reaction. Firefighters train to run toward dangerous situations in order to overcome the instinctive fear to flee. Their training is long and arduous, so when the moment arises, they can perform their duties. The widow demonstrated the natural hesitation of her humanity, yet when the word of God came forth, she immediately relied on her spirituality to overcome her fear. We must work daily in prayer and study to grow our faith in God.

---

» *What are you doing to grow your faith in God?*

---

#### B. Meal and Oil Never Ran Out

Imagine a drought and famine so severe that it would cause a widow to proclaim the impending death of herself and her son for lack of food. Elijah asked her to trust in the Lord and first make a morsel of bread for him; then the Lord would provide an abundance of meal and oil. 1 Kings 17:15–16 states, “And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. 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.” Because of her faith and obedience, God was able to perform the miracle proclaimed by His prophet.

Faith and obedience are inseparable. The Bible tells of a man named Naaman, a powerful man within Syria who also happened to be a leper. Naaman heard about the prophet Elisha and was told this man of God could heal his leprosy. He journeyed to the house of Elisha, only to be greeted by a messenger. II Kings 5:10 states, “And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.” Naaman was not pleased with this situation, but he was desperate. Verse 14 explains, “Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.” If Naaman had refused to obey what God had told him to do via the prophet, he would not have been healed of leprosy.

### **C. The Lord Takes Care of Those Who Put Him First**

Every character in the Bible who put God first has always enjoyed God’s provisions. Even when the situation is less than desirable, God still provides for those who put Him first. Joseph was betrayed by his own brothers and sold into slavery. They had become jealous of Joseph being held up as the most blessed son of their father. Joseph ended up living many years as a slave, and his father thought he was dead. Joseph worked hard and was held in high regard by his master, Potiphar. One day Potiphar’s wife tried to seduce Joseph, but he fled. She lied to her husband saying Joseph had attacked her. Joseph was sent to prison an innocent man and remained incarcerated for years. But because he was able to interpret dreams, Pharaoh called Joseph to his court to tell Pharaoh what his dreams meant. When Joseph gave the interpretation to Pharaoh, he elevated Joseph to the second most powerful man in Egypt. When Joseph’s brothers came to Egypt looking for food, Joseph was in a position to help save his family and was eventually reunited with his father. Joseph was obedient to God throughout his ordeal. In Genesis 50:20 Joseph told his brothers, “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.”

---

» *Why is it difficult to put God first when it may feel like He has put you last?*

---

## **IV. GOD WILL SUPPLY**

God will supply our needs if we trust in Him and put Him first. This sounds easy, yet we struggle with it daily. It is imperative to understand we must first trust God and then choose to put Him first in every aspect of our lives.

### **A. We Must Trust in the Lord**

Trust in God is the first step of faith. We cannot be saved without putting our trust in the Lord. Even when we do not understand all that is happening, we must trust He has our best interests at heart. Too often we reason ourselves out of trusting God by interfering with His work. Moses told the Israelites to “stand still, and see the

salvation of the LORD” (Exodus 14:13). As human beings we always try to control every aspect of our lives and circumstances. This is impossible. Trusting God enables us to rely less on ourselves and more on Him. Proverbs 3:5–6 states, “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

### **B. We Must Put God First**

The New Testament records Jesus saying, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). Today’s society rejects the idea of putting anything or anyone before oneself. Yet God teaches us to put Him first and He will supply all our needs. We must be cautious and understand that what we need and what we want can be two very different things. Sometimes we overlook the thing we need and focus on the thing we want. Often we want material things, positions of power or prestige, or a particular romantic partner; these make us lose focus. We must remember, if we put God first, He will supply all we need.

---

» *What indicators demonstrate someone is putting God first?*

---

## **▶▶ INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE**

If you saw someone drowning and swam out to assist, could you save the person if the person fought your efforts? It is highly unlikely you would be able to pull that person to safety because in the struggle you would become fatigued and put your own self at risk of drowning. In the height of panic, people often neglect assistance because they do not trust those who are offering help. If the drowning person does not submit to your direction, allowing you to help, the person will simply drown.

This principle can also be applicable to us spiritually. If we do not trust God, He cannot help us. The world often criticizes God for not forcing help upon us. God has given us free will. His love will not force us to submit to anything we do not wish. Therefore, we must build our relationship with God to the point of trusting Him beyond reason. His Word promises in Deuteronomy 31:6, “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”