

BEING IN THE PLACE OF GOD'S BLESSING & PROVISION

By John & Lorella Rouster

1 Kings 17:4, 9 “And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. ... Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.”

Twice, God told him specifically where to go, and THERE he would experience God's provision in unusual ways.

What if he had gone somewhere else?

It was a time of devastation all around him. Others were experiencing famine and devastation.

Their trouble in a sense was due to Elijah's prophetic word that there would be no rain nor dew for years without Elijah's command. The people could have and undoubtedly would have blamed their plight on him.

God sent Elijah to a place of seclusion and protection.

First God sent him to the brook Cherith, where he drank from the brook and was fed twice a day by ravens sent by God.

This was a secret hiding place. Nobody but God knew where he was or was able to help him, and still it was enough. God knew where he was, God knew he was there in obedience to His will, and God, controlling the creatures He made, simply commanded the ravens to feed him.

After awhile, another problem. The brook dried up. Probably Elijah saw this coming. It is not recorded that Elijah complained or accused God. God knew the stream was drying up, and at that point revealed to Elijah the next step. He was to go to the town of Zarephath, where God had commanded a widow woman to feed him—not just once, but continually to sustain him.

He didn't know how he would find the woman, but immediately he arose and obeyed the step he knew.

The woman was at the gate of the city gathering sticks. He didn't have to go looking for her.

It looked very natural, but God's specific guidance was behind it all.

First Elijah asked for a drink of water. She complied. Then, as she was going, almost as if it was an afterthought, he asked her to bring him a piece of bread.

The woman confesses that she is at the very end of her supplies. If she grants Elijah's request, it will be at the expense of her own son's life.

Note how God brings two very needy people together to supply one another's needs through obedience.

Elijah in faith promises her that what supplies she shares will not run out for as long as the famine lasts.

Later Elijah helps her again by raising her son to life when he dies.

18:1 After three years, God commands Elijah to go tell Ahab that He will again send rain on the earth.

Again, specific instruction is given about where he is to go and what he is to do.

PRINCIPLES

God gives specific guidance to those who seek Him and obey Him.

God's specific guidance relates to a certain time period in our lives and not necessarily to our entire lives.

Where God leads us, He also provides for us.

God's provision is tied to our obedience to be in the place to which God called us.

God has many unusual ways of providing for us, ways we could not possibly have expected.

God often works so as to use God's people to be a mutual blessing and encouragement to one another. He can also meet our needs without using people, since He controls all of nature.

Bad times do not prevent God's provision for His people.

Some periods of our lives are for public ministry (like before the King), some for quiet private ministry (like to the widow and her son), and some for solitary communion with God (like at the brook).