

**The Prophet Elijah
1 Kings 17:7-16
The LORD Provides**

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

⁷ And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to him, ⁹ “Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to feed you.” ¹⁰ So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, “Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.” ¹¹ And as she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, “Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” ¹² And she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now 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 first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴ For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.’” ¹⁵ And she went and did as Elijah said. And she and he and her household ate for many days. ¹⁶ The jar of flour was not spent, neither did the jug of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah. (1 Kings 17:7-16)

Introduction

- Today is **the second week** in our study through the life and ministry of **Elijah**.
- Last week we were introduced to both the **Prophet**, who is **A Man like Us**.
- And his **evil times**, characterized by **King Ahab** and his wife **Jezabeel**.
- This **evil couple** was leading Isreal away from **the Living God**,
- into the worship the rain god **Baal**, and the goddess of happiness and fortune **Asherah**.
- And this **great evil** led God to send Elijah to confront Ahab saying...

¹ ...“As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.” (1 Kings 17:1)

- Judgment would come upon Isreal for its wickedness.
- And once Elijah delivered the Lord’s message, he was then directed to...

³ “Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. (1 Kings 17:3)

- God also told Elijah that he would provide for him...

⁴ You shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.” (1 Kings 17:4)

- And Elijah did as the Lord commanded.
- He went to the **brook of Cherith**...

6 And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook. (1 Kings 17:6)

- **And that's where we left Elijah last week.**
- His **obedience** to the God by **confronting Ahab**,
- and then going **Cherith** demonstrated **his trust in the Lord**.
- But God would call Elijah to even **greater faith** and **more difficult obedience**.
- In **verse 7 of 1 Kings 17** we read...

7 And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. (1 Kings 17:7)

- Even Elijah, **wasn't immune from the effects of God's judgment on Israel**.
- His promised provision of water from the brook was no more.
- This must have tested Elijah's faith.
- I can hear him (or at least me) saying, **now wait a minute God**,
- I did everything you asked of me, and didn't you promise me that I could drink from this brook,
- And now you've taken it away, **what's up with that?**
- But if Elijah had such thoughts, they're not recorded in Scripture.
- Maybe he understood that God had not promised to provide water **forever**.
- And maybe he **trusted that God could provide** for him **with or without** a flowing brook.
- Maybe he remembered the story of **Abraham and Issac** recorded in **Genesis chapter 22**,
- **God had** called Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac.
- But in the **nick of time**, God stayed Abraham's hand and provided a **ram** to sacrifice instead.
- And in **verse 14 of Genesis 22**, we read Abraham's response...

14 So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"... (Genesis 22:14)

- Jehovah Jirah, The LORD provides.
- And that's what we find in our passage for today.
- The Lord will continue to provide for **his prophet**, and he provides for others as well.
- And as we look at this picture of God's provision,
- It's my prayer that we'll grow in understanding and trust in **the Lord's provision in our lives**.

- And there two aspects of his provision that I want us to see today... **first...**

1. The Lord Provides for Our Physical Needs

- Just when Elijah's water supply had dried up, in the nick of time, **we read in verse 8...**

8 Then the word of the LORD came to him,

- This is **the second time** we read that **God spoke to Elijah**.
- He first told him to depart **from Ahad** and now the LORD says...

9 "Arise, go to Zarephath (ZAR-E-FATH), which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to feed you." (1 Kings 17:8-9)

- So, God would continue to provide **for Elijah through a widow**.
- And again, Scripture doesn't tell us what Elijah thought of this **latest word from the LORD**.
- But he may well have thought, **"God must be joking!"**
- It was one thing to **be fed by birds**, but another thing entirely to **go to Sidon**, of all places.
- Do you remember what we **learned about Sidon last week?**
- **Back in 1 Kings 16 we read...**

31 ... [Ahab] took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Eth-baal king of the Sidonians, (1 Kings 16:31)

- Sidon was Jezebel's home turf.
- Her Father was the king and his name was Eth-baal (with Baal)
- Zarephath **was certainly a Baal worshiping town**.
- Filled **with idolatry, unholy sacrifices, and temple prostitution**.
- So, understand this God was commanding Elijah to go down into the **heart of darkness**.
- And not just to go there for a quick visit, **but to...**

dwell there

- That word **dwell** means to remain, to settle.
- God was calling Elijah, **for the foreseeable future**, to live in a **cesspool of sin**.
- And to make matters more difficult, **Elijah was to be fed by a widow**.
- **To be a widow** in the **ancient Near East** is practically **synonymous with being "poor"**.
- Because widows were **largely unprotected by the law** and were easily exploited.
- So, I hope you can see just how difficult this most recent **"word of the LORD"** would have been for Elijah to get on board with.
- And yet, his response, was again **one of trust and obedience**.
- **Verse 10 begins...**

10 So he arose and went to Zarephath... (1 Kings 17:10)

- Elijah again obeys the Lord.
- But when Elijah arrived at Zarephath, **things did not look terribly promising.**

And when came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks

- This is the widow that God had commanded to feed Elijah.
- She was, as expected, poor, **having to walk the streets just to find a few sticks for her fire.**
- Elijah then boldly...

called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." ¹¹ And as she was going to bring it...

- She was willing to give Elijah some water, but then...

he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." (1 Kings 17:11)

- Elijah wasn't asking for much: **just a little water and a morsel of bread.**
- But even this was more than the woman could give,
- If God had commanded her to feed the prophet, **she was struggling with obedience.**
- **Because her circumstances were not ideal. Verse 12...**

¹² And she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now 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." (1 Kings 17:12)

- Needless to say, it was not the best time for **an out-of-town guest to show up!**
- The widow had **barely enough** to make a **biscuit**, let alone **a loaf of bread.**
- Can you see her point?
- She wasn't being mean, **she was just down to her last meal.**
- Yet Elijah, persisted, **Verse 13.**

¹³ And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said. But first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. (1 Kings 17:13)

- In giving this command, Elijah was trusting God to provide for their physical needs.
- Although the widow was scraping the bottom of the barrel,
- Elijah knew that God's resources cannot be exhausted.
- And that's what he tells the widow in **verse 14...**

¹⁴ For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.'" (1 Kings 17:14)

- God had informed Elijah that just as he had **done in Cherith with a brook and ravens.**
- He would now provide for Elijah through this widow.
- Her flour and oil would not give out until the rain returned.
- So, Elijah trusted in the LORD, **but what about the widow?**

- Well, verse **15** gives the answer

15 And she went and did as Elijah said.

- Here we see the woman's faith in both the command she received from the LORD
- and in the promise, he had given his prophet Elijah.
- And their faith, **resulted in God's provision...**

And she and he and her household ate for many days. 16 The jar of flour was not spent, neither did the jug of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah. (1 Kings 17:15-16)

- Every day that Elijah stayed in Zarephath, the widow went to her barrel of flour and her jar of oil and found enough to make bread for one more day.
- **Corrie ten Boom** had a similar experience in the German concentration camp at **Ravensbrook**.
- **Corrie** and her sister **Betsie** were captured **by the Nazis** for hiding Jews **during World War II**.
- And **Betsie** became ill during **their long imprisonment**.
- Listen to Corrie's description of giving her sister **life-preserving vitamins**.
- Another strange thing was happening. The bottle continued to produce drops.
- It scarcely seemed possible, so small a bottle, so many doses a day.
- Now, in addition to **Betsie**, a dozen others in their area of **Ravensbrook** were taking it.
- My instinct was always to hoard it, **wrote Corrie**, Betsie was growing so very weak!
- But the others were ill as well.
- It was hard to say no to eyes that burned with fever, hands that shook with chill.
- I tried to save it for the very weakest—but even these soon numbered fifteen, twenty, twenty-five.
- And still, every time I tilted the little bottle, a drop appeared at the tip of the glass stopper.
- It just couldn't be!
- I held it up to the light, trying to see how much was left,
- but the dark brown glass was too thick to see through.
- "There was a woman in the Bible," Betsie said, "**whose oil jar was never empty.**"
- She turned to it in the Book of Kings, **the story of the poor widow of Zarephath...**
- It was one thing to believe that such things were possible thousands of years ago,
- another to have it happen now, to us, this very day.
- And yet it happened this day, and the next, and the next, until an awed little group of spectators stood around watching the drops fall onto the daily rations of bread.
- Many nights I lay awake in the shower of straw dust from the mattress above,
- trying to fathom the marvel of supply lavished upon us.
- "Maybe," I whispered to Betsie, "only a molecule or two really gets through that little pinhole—and then in the air it expands!"

- I heard her soft laughter in the dark.
- **“Don’t try too hard to explain it, Corrie.**
- Just accept it as a surprise from a Father who loves you.”
- Corrie ten Boom was encountering the same Lord who provided for Elijah.
- He had provided for **Elijah a Brook Cherith.**
- And he would provide for him through **the widow of Zarephath.**
- And this is the same God we serve today,
- the God who provides for the physical needs of his people.
- The Lord provides what we need every day.
- He gives us more than enough to survive and thrive.
- Therefore, we can offer the same testimony as the psalmist:

⁹ Oh, fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him have no lack! (Psalms 34:9)

- The Lord provides for those who fear him, those who live in trust and obedience to HIM!
- OKAY, I could end the sermon here,
- We’ve covered all the verses, and we’ve learned or been reminded of an important truth.
- **The Lord provides for Our Physical Needs.**
- This should be an encouragement,
- Especially to those who are facing physical challenges.
- It’s good to know that our heavenly father cares for our physical wellbeing.
- But it’s even more important to know that he cares about our spiritual needs.
- That, along with our physical needs...

2. The Lord Provides for Our Spiritual Needs

- In fact, the Lord considers our spiritual needs of greater importance than our physical needs.
- As **Jesus famously said...**

³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

- Don’t worry about your physical needs because the Lord will provide.

³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Matthew 6:31-33)

- God wants us to focus not so much on our physical but on our spiritual needs.
- Seeking the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.
- That is, **entering the kingdom of God**, being saved from our sin and living righteous lives.
- This what God is most concerned about.

- **Therefore, God certainly provides for our spiritual needs.**
- **Specifically**, the LORD provides **our salvation**.
- **This** is the most basic and important lesson in all Scripture.
- And we see it **illustrated in Elijah's encounter with the widow of Zarephath**.
- **Yes, God is providing for their physical needs, but as he does.**
- He also provides for their (specifically the widow's) **spiritual needs**.
- And so, what we're going to do is look at this passage again, **with spiritual eyes**.
- Because in these verses we are shown that God provides salvation, **saving grace** for **at least four kinds of people**. **First...**

A. He Provides for the Weak

- The widow of Zarephath had at least **two things going against her**,
- Like everyone, **she did not have the benefit of rain**, for the drought was impacting Sidon as well as Israel.
- Plus, **she had no husband to help her**.
- This resulted in her being extremely **weak, needy and even helpless**.
- No government aid in Sidon.
- And finally, the day came when **the weakness overcame this widow**.
- **In verse 12** she says to Elijah...

12 ...“I have nothing baked,” she said, “only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now 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” (1 Kings 17:12).

- She had resigned herself and her son to death.
- As far as she's concerned, it's over.
- They'd been wasting away for weeks.
- Now she'll gather sticks, bake a little bread, eat, and die.
- You can't get much weaker than this.
- Yet God meets her (and her son) he provides for them in their weakness.
- This story demonstrates the truth of **Deuteronomy 10:17-18**.

17 For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. (Deuteronomy 10:17)

- If God shows no partiality, if he takes no bribes,
- Then we do not have to “be somebody”, we don't have to be wealthy, to receive his grace.
- God doesn't favor **the rich and famous, on the contrary**,

18 He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner (or foreigner), giving him food and clothing. (Deuteronomy 10:18)

- **What a beautiful promise!**
- God defends the cause of the **fatherless, like the fatherless boy in Zarephath,**
- and protects the **plight of the widow, like the boy's husbandless mother.**
- In the midst of their weakness the Lord provides.
- By his grace, He sent them his prophet and gave them his promise of provision.
- By his grace, He provided for their physical needs.
- And by his grace, he would provide for their spiritual needs as well.
- Now this doesn't mean that we all need become widows or orphans to receive God's grace.
- The point is that **God's grace is for everyone.**
- Because in reality, **especially when it comes to spiritual matters,**
- we are **all weak, we are helpless.**
- There was nothing the widow or her son could do to save themselves,
- and there is nothing we can do to save ourselves.
- We all need God's spiritual provision, his saving grace.
- And that comes to us through **Jesus Christ.**
- **Jesus provides for the spiritual needs of the weak.**
- As Paul wrote to the Romans...

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. (Romans 5:6)

- God delights in saving **the weak and helpless.**
- Or I should say, God delights in saving those who **know they are weak and helpless.**
- Because until we realize our weakness, **we will not come to him.**
- We will not seek or **receive the provision of Jesus Christ.**
- The widow of Zarephath clearly understood and admitted to her weakness.
- And God met and provided for her in her weakness.
- And when we understand and admit our weakness, God will meet us,
- **he will provide for our spiritual needs,** He will provide us with saving grace.
- For in our weakness, He is Strong.
- So first, this story illustrates that God provides for the weak.
- **And second, it also shows that...**

B. He Provides for the Outsider

- In the **Old Testament** we see God **primarily working in and through the children of Israel.**
- The physical descendants of **Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**
- We see God providing for **the physical and spiritual needs of his covenant family.**

- However, God's heart **has always been for all peoples**.
- We see this **way back in Genesis 12**, when God made his covenant with Abraham...
- He ends the covenant with this promise...

3 ...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (Genesis 12:3)

- God may have established Israel as his covenant people.
- But his plan was that **through Israel** all the families (the peoples of the earth) would be blessed.
- And we know that this blessing ultimately comes through God's greatest provision **Jesus Christ**, a descendent of Abraham.
- Jesus provides the greatest blessing of all, **saving grace**, to all the families of the earth.
- And to illustrate and foreshadow this,
- throughout the Old Testament we're given pictures God's people (Israel),
- descendants of Abraham, blessing those **outside of Israel**.
- We see it in **Joseph** as he blesses (saves) **Egypt** and the surrounding nations.
- We see it in **Solomon** as he blesses the **Queen of Sheba** and other outsiders with his wisdom.
- We see it in **Jonah** as he reluctantly blesses **Ninevah**.
- We see it in **Daniel** as he blesses the **Babylonian and Persian Empires** with his service.
- And we see it here as **Elijah** blesses this **Sidonian woman and her son**.
- Through Elijah God blessed **them physically providing for their daily bread**.
- And, as we will see, **he blessed them spiritually with saving grace**.
- Notice that God had prepared the widow's heart.
- **First** in **verse 9**, to Elijah God says...

9 "...I have commanded a widow there to feed you." (1 Kings 17:9)

- God had, in some way, revealed himself to the widow, commanding her to feed **his prophet**.
- And this certainly had an impact on her,
- because her own words acknowledged the existence of the true God.
- The first thing she said to Elijah was

12 ... "As the LORD your God lives..." (1 Kings 17:12)

- Although the widow lived in Baal country, she confessed that the God of Elijah is a living God.
- And notice she calls him **the LORD**, remember that when you see LORD in all caps that is the Hebrew Yahweh (I AM).
- She used **God's true name** and declared that **he is ALIVE**.
- But notice also that Yahweh, the living God is not yet her God.
- To Elijah she says, **As the LORD your God lives**

- The living God may be Elijah's God, **but he is not yet the widows God.**
- She has **not yet trusted in God for herself,**
- she has not **been saved by grace through faith** in the living God.
- At this point in her life, she was just like many people who believe that there is a God.
- Yet they are still **outside his family.**
- But it's not enough to believe that there is a God; **he must become your God.**
- Put in **New Testament terms**, unless and until **Jesus Christ becomes the Lord of your life,**
- you remain **like this widow**, outside the family of God.
- You may believe in **the God of your Family or Your Church,**
- You may believe that there is a God who has the power to give eternal life.
- You may even believe that eternal life comes through Jesus Christ alone.
- But **this is meaningless until he becomes your God.**
- Until you trust that he has provided for your salvation through Jesus Christ.
- The death of Jesus is of **no value** to you unless you believe that he died on the cross for your personal sins.
- Until you trust in Jesus Christ for yourself, until he is the Lord, the God of your life...
- You are still outside the family of God;
- You have not yet received God's saving grace.
- As the **apostle John wrote.**

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. (John 1:10-11)

- Many in the world, including his own people, the Jews, did not receive Jesus Christ.
- They did not believe, **and therefore they remained as outsiders.**
- And today if you have not received Jesus Christ,
- If you have not trusted in his saving work on the cross and his resurrection from the dead,
- then you remain an outsider to God's family.
- **However, you need not remain outside.**
- The grace of God is for **those who are still outside his family.**
- The living God sent Elijah to the widow of Zarephath, not only to provide for his physical needs,
- But that he might provide for her spiritual needs,
- That she might be brought into the family of God.
- And in the same way, the living God sends out his word,
- through his messengers today to invite everyone to become his children.
- And as John goes on to make clear...

¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (John 1:12)

- Anyone who repents (turns from their sin) and comes to Christ for grace will be saved.
- Will be a child of God, an insider.
- So, in this widow we have seen that God **provides for the weak and the outsider**.
- But his provision is not given to all who are weak or outsiders,
- **This widow illustrates that...**

C. He Provides for the Elect

- God's grace is for those He chooses.
- Saving grace is **sovereign grace**; God's grace is God's choice.
- To put this in theological terms, **the grace of God is a matter of divine election**.
- And that's what we see **God's choice** of the widow of Zarephath.
- Of all the widows throughout the **Middle East**,
- **Why was she alone chosen to receive God's grace?**
- Why did God come to her and reveal himself to her?
- Why did he send his Prophet to her?
- She was certainly not a likely candidate.
- She lived in Jezebel country, her king was Ethbaal (with Baal).
- Baal and Asherah worship was the religion of the day, **and probably her religion as well**.
- Why was she chosen to hear the good news about the living God?
- Well, the only answer to this question is recorded in **the Gospel of Luke 4**.
- Jesus had been preaching to his friends and neighbors in **his hometown of Nazareth**.
- Although they all spoke well of him, they saw in him nothing more than **the son of a carpenter**.
- **And this was his response to their unbelief...**

²⁴ And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵ But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, ²⁶ and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. (Luke 4:24-26)

- Here we learn that Elijah's visit to **Zarephath was a judgment on Israel for their lack of faith**.
- We also learn that **the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ** is for **Gentiles in Sidonia** as well as for Jews in Israel.
- **The gospel is for all people from every nation in the world**.
- But Jesus also teaches that **saving grace** is a matter of **divine election**.
- The reason God chose the widow of Zarephath over all others.
- Was because it was God's will and purpose **to save the widow of Zarephath**.
- **He sent Elijah** so that **she might be saved both physically and spiritually**.
- Of all the widows to whom God's prophet might have been sent, **she alone was chosen**.

- This is the mystery of the sovereignty of God's saving grace.
- God is always sovereign in salvation.
- As Paul wrote to **the Ephesians**...

⁴ ...he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, (Ephesians 1:4-5)

- Like the widow of Zarephath we never would have been saved unless God chose to save us.
- From beginning to end, **salvation is the work of God**.
- We can't earn it, we don't deserve it, that's why it's called "**grace**."
- So, this story illustrates that God provides salvation for **the weak**, for **outsiders**,
- for the elect (those he chooses). And finally...

D. He Provides for Those Who Have Faith

- The weak and the outsider must put their faith in God to receive salvation.
- And the elect proves their election by putting their faith in God for salvation.
- And this was just as true in the Old Testament as in the New.
- Before Christ came, salvation was given to those who put their trust in God.
- In God's promises, including the promise of a coming Messiah, a coming Savior.
- And when this savior, Jesus Christ came,
- He died for the sins of all who put their trust in God and his promises,
- including those who trusted before he even came.
- Abraham is the prime example of this, in fact the Apostle Paul in Romans chapter 4 uses the example of Abraham to show that **all are saved by faith**.
- In **verse 3** he writes...

³ For what does the Scripture say? (In Genesis 15 if you want to look it up) "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. (Romans 4:3)

- Because Abraham believed God, that is he put his faith in God and his promises.
- God counted him as righteous.
- God, knowing that Christ would die for Abraham's sins
- and knowing that Abraham trusted in God and his promise **God counted him righteous**.
- Put another way, even before Christ died for Abraham's sins,
- God put the righteousness of Christ into Abraham's account.
- Abraham was counted righteous and therefore he could enter the presence of God.
- He was saved by grace through faith.

- And we see this same belief, this saving faith in the widow of Zarephath.
- She rested on **God's sovereign grace and trusted in him for her salvation.**
- Even in her desperation, **she trusted the word of God.**
- Elijah came to her with **an extreme test of faith...**
- Remember she was about to **cook a last supper** for her and her son...

13 And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said. But first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. (1 Kings 17:13)

- This widow was in desperate straits, on the verge of death, on the verge of seeing her son die.
- How easy (and logical) it would have been for her to refuse Elijah's request.
- But then the promise comes...

14 For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.' (1 Kings 17:14)

- At this point the widow has a choice, do I trust in what I have,
- Do I trust in myself, in my resources, in what I can see and feel and touch and taste,
- in the little bit of flour and oil remaining.
- Or do I trust in this prophet of the LORD, **do I trust in the promises of God.**
- And she makes **the right choice, verse 15...**

15 And she went and did as Elijah said. (1 Kings 17:15)

- This is real faith!
- She obeyed God's command, she took the step of faith that the Lord required,
- She gave what could have been the last of her food to Elijah.
- And she could do this only because she **trusted God's promise to provide.**
- She staked her life, and the life of her son, on God's promise
- And **God did not disappoint her.**
- He met her physical needs; the flour and oil did not run out.
- And he met her spiritual needs.
- Check this out!
- When the widow of Zarephath received Elijah, in effect she was receiving Jesus Christ by faith.
- Jesus said to his disciples,

40 "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. 41 The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward... (Matthew 10:40-41)

- This was how the widow of Zarephath received Elijah.
- She received **him as a prophet sent from God,**
- and to receive **Elijah in this way** was tantamount to **receiving Jesus Christ.**

- Jesus said that the result of receiving a prophet is a **“prophet’s reward.”**
- **What is a “prophet’s reward”?**
- It’s the reward that a prophet **himself deserves from God.**
- In this case, we’ve seen how God rewarded Elijah,
- He met his physical needs with bread and water.
- And he met his spiritual needs;
- **Elijah was a chosen child of God who had been saved by grace.**
- And so, when the widow received Elijah as God’s prophet,
- God met both her physical and spiritual needs.
- She received the same bread and the same grace: **the prophet’s reward.**
- And the same reward is available to everyone who receives Jesus by faith.
- Anyone who trusts in Jesus Christ will have both their physical and spiritual needs met.
- So, what needs do you have?
- And who are you trusting to meet those needs?
- Are you trusting in yourself and your very limited resources (a little flour and oil).
- Or are you trusting in the infinite resources of the Living God to provide exactly what you need when you need it.
- The Bible is clear **that The Lord Provides for His people.**
- **In the OT David writes...**

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (Psalms 23:1)

- If the LORD is your shepherd, if he is YOUR GOD,
- then you will lack nothing you truly need, **physically or spiritually.**
- And in the **NT Paul writes...**

¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)

- If God is **your** God, he will supply your every need,
- both physical and spiritually **through his riches in glory in Christ Jesus! AMEN**
- **PRAYER**