

Elijah ~ Part 3

In my last post, we explored **Elijah's** prophesy of an extended drought in Israel and his being instructed by God to hide at the **Vadi K'rit near the Yarden**. In this post, we learn how he helped a widow in **1 Kings 17:8-16**.

The Obedience of Elijah and the Faith of a Goy (Gentile)

"⁸ Then this word of Adonai came to him: ⁹ 'Get up; go to Tzarfat, a village in Tzidon; and live there. I have ordered a widow there to provide for you.' ¹⁰ So he set out and went to Tzarfat. On reaching the gate of the city, he saw a widow there gathering sticks. He called out to her, 'Please bring a little water in a container for me to drink.' ¹¹ As she was going to get it, he called after her, 'Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand.' ¹² She answered, 'As Adonai your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a pot and a little oil in the jug. Here I am, gathering a couple sticks of wood so that I can go and cook it for myself and my son. After we have eaten that, we will die.' ¹³ Elijah said to her, 'Don't be afraid. Go, and do what you said; but first, use a little of it to make me a small loaf of bread; and bring it out to me. After that, make food for yourself and your son. ¹⁴ For this is what Adonai the God of Isra'el, says: 'The pot of meal will not get used up, nor will there fail to be oil in the jug, until the day Adonai sends rain down on the land.' ¹⁵ She went and acted according to what Elijah had said; and she, he and her household had food to eat for a long time. ¹⁶ The pot of meal did not get used up, nor did there fail to be oil in the jug, in fulfillment of the word of Adonai spoken through Elijah." ~ 1 Kings 17:8-16 (CJB)

After **Vadi K'rit near the Yarden** dried up, God told **Elijah** to leave. God's instructions may have shocked the prophet, for the Lord commanded him to travel northeast about a hundred miles to **Tzarfat, a village in Tzidon**. God was sending **Elijah** into Gentile territory. **Tzarfat** was not too far from **Izevel's** home city of **Tzidon**. He would be living in enemy territory!

Yeshua Himself gave a theologically proper interpretation of this passage that God sent His messenger with beneficial signs and wonders to a **Goy**. **"It's true, I'm telling you — when Elijah was in Isra'el, and the sky was sealed off for three-and-a-half years, so that all the Land suffered a severe famine, there were many widows; ²⁶ but Elijah was sent to none of them, only to a widow in Tzarfat in the land of Tzidon."** Luke 4:25-26 (CJB) God's witness through signs was not given to Israelites alone.

Even more, he was instructed to live with a widow whom God had **ordered to provide** for him, and widows were usually among the neediest people in the land. Since **Tzidon** depended on Israel for much of its food supply (1 Kings 5:9; Acts 12:20), food wouldn't be too plentiful there.

But when God sends us, we must obey and leave the rest to Him, for we don't live on man's explanations ~ we live on God's promises. ~ Warren Wiersbe

Note that the widow said: **as Adonai your God lives**. She readily discerned that **Elijah** was a Jew, but likely she probably worshiped Ba'al. We learn in 1 Kings 18:1 that it's probable that **Elijah** remained with her for two years, and during that time, the widow and her son inevitably turned from the worship of idols and put their faith in the true and living God.

The woman's assets were few: a little oil in a flask, a handful of meal (barley), and a few sticks to provide fuel for a fire. But **Elijah's** assets were significant, for God Almighty had promised to take care of him, his hostess, and her son. **Elijah** gave her God's promise that neither the jar of grain nor the flask of oil would be used up before the end of the drought and famine. God would one day send the rain, but until then, He would continue to provide bread for them ~ and He did.

Grain and oil were two of the major exports of the city of **Tzarfat**. The fact that they were in short supply is an indication of how severe the drought was. They are also two of the essential commodities for survival. The contest between God and Ba'al continues as God demonstrates that He can provide for "Ba'al's people" in "Ba'al's territory" just as quickly as He can provide for His people and just as soon as He can withhold from whomever He chooses.

This miraculous sign illustrated that God rewards faith and obedience, even that of a Gentile.

A couple of final thoughts on this passage. How did **Eliyahu** know that this widow was the one to whom God had instructed to provide for him? And, how did the widow realize it was **Eliyahu** was the person to care for? Note that in their brief dialogue both referred to **Adonai the God of Israel**. He confirmed this divine appointment.

In my next post, we will continue to explore the Biblical story of **Eliyahu** by looking at **A Miraculous Resurrection** in **1 Kings 17:17-24**.