

Always Believe God's Promises



Text: 1 Kings 17:1-16 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: It's *natural* for us to *doubt* extraordinary things; therefore, today, I'm excited to encourage you to **ALWAYS BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES!**

- The Setting:** In the ninth century before Christ, Israel had been divided into ♦the northern kingdom and ♦the southern kingdom. In the north, *all the kings were disobedient to the LORD*. Regarding **Ahab**, a northern king, the Bible says, **1 Kings 16:30** Ahab... *did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him*. In contrast, *Elijah faithfully served the LORD!*
- Elijah Told the Truth:** **1 Kings 17:1** Now Elijah... [*because of Ahab's great wickedness*] said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word." // **THINK:** No rain would ♦devastate the north and ♦make Ahab's reign miserable.

3. **The LORD Promised:** He said to Elijah: ³ “...hide yourself [from Ahab] by the brook Cherith [about 28 miles from Samaria]... ⁴ ...drink of the brook, and **I have commanded the ravens** [who are scavengers] **to provide for you there.**” // Quite a promise!
4. **Elijah Obeyed:** As the LORD commanded, so *Elijah obeyed!* ⁶ The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook. // The LORD’s promise seemed impossible, *BUT He did it!* Let us **ALWAYS BELIEVE GOD’S PROMISES!**
5. **Again, the LORD Promised:** ⁷ It happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. ⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to [Elijah], saying, ⁹ “Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there; behold, **I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.**” // First, *ravens!* Now, *a widow!*
- Go to Sidon – Why is that Shocking? Sidon was ▶ the birthplace of Jezebel, *Ahab’s wife*, and ▶ known for its great wickedness!
 - A Widow Will Provide for You: No way! *Widows could barely provide for themselves!*
 - What have YOU done when a command of the LORD did not make sense?
 - What did Elijah do?
6. **Elijah Did What Didn’t Make Sense:** ¹⁰ So he arose and went to Zarephath [a journey of about 50 miles], and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, “Please get

me a little water in a jar, that I may drink.” ¹¹ As she was going to get *it*, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand.” // What happened? Elijah, *seeing a woman*, asked her for water, *and she gave a favorable response!* Therefore, he also asked her for a piece of bread. Elijah ♦**believed** the LORD’s promise and ♦**took** the necessary steps to receive the benefits. How is the LORD calling *all people* to receive great benefits?

a. Be Saved – How? **Repent** (*turn from your sins*) **and believe** (*trust in Jesus*) (*Mk. 1:15*)!

b. Be at Peace – How? **Trust in the LORD** (*Isaiah 26:3*)!

7. **The Problem:** ¹² But she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.”

a. **THINK:** ♦There had been no rain (*since Elijah announced the LORD’s will to Ahab*), ♦the Brook Cherith had dried up, and ♦everyone in the northern kingdom was suffering.

b. The Widow’s Plan: I will use my **final flour and oil** to make a *small loaf of bread* for me and my son, ♦then we will eat it, and ♦then we will starve to death!

8. **The LORD’s Promise:** ¹³ Then Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake from it **first** and bring *it* out to me, and afterward you may make *one* for yourself and for your son. ¹⁴ For thus says the LORD God of Israel, **The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain on the face of the earth.**”

- a. That's Impossible: After making one small loaf of bread, *the flour and oil will be gone!*
 - b. What Do YOU Do? Believe God – *NO MATTER WHAT* or use your logic to cancel out God's word?
9. **The Woman's Trust:** ¹⁵ So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for *many* days. ¹⁶ The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through Elijah.
- a. In the Face of Death: The widow brought *bread to him FIRST*; then the LORD caused *the flour and oil containers to NEVER RUN OUT until it rained!*
 - b. How are WE being tempted to put OUR logic over God's promises? Even though WE'VE done it countless times, now is the moment ➡to *STOP*, ➡to *TURN AROUND*, and ➡to *GO FORWARD* by **ALWAYS BELIEVING GOD'S PROMISES!**
 - c. How Do We Show Our Belief? *By doing whatever God's word says!*

Conclusion: The widow believed what seemed impossible – *AND THE LORD PROVIDED!* So, when God's forgiveness seems impossible – *LET US BE SURE WE HAVE IT THROUGH JESUS!*

Let Us Pray: Dear LORD, Thank You for making us Your own through Jesus! Now, wherever we are weak – *make us strong*, and wherever we are wavering – *move us to ALWAYS BELIEVE YOUR PROMISES!*

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