

Prophecy, Pronouncement, and Provision

1 Kings 17:1-6

¹ *And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word.”*

² *Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying,* ³ *“Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan.*

⁴ *And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.”*

⁵ *So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan.* ⁶ *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 17:1-6

Read 1 Kings 17:1-6

Ahab was notoriously the most wicked king in the history of Israel! His wickedness was so bad that he became a standard for measuring the wickedness of every king who followed his reign in Israel.

Ahab was also a very dangerous king. He was the son of Omri, the captain of Israel’s army, who had taken the kingdom of Israel by a military coup after the assassination of King Elah.

Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to

walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him (1 Kings 16:30–33).

Yet even during the lowest and most idolatrous time in Israel, God was still at work. There was a company of prophets (men who served God, sought God, and spoke God's Word) who lived and ministered in Israel. Elijah was one of those prophets who became distinguished among the others and a leader because of the way he allowed the Lord to use him to bring the people of Israel back to God.

Even in the worst and most evil times God is working. It often takes dark times to distinguish the people of God from the people of this world. Paul pointed to that fact when he identified God's people as "*children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in a dark world*" (Philippians 2:15). Are things dark and growing darker in this world? Are there men like Ahab who seem to be making successful power grabs and taking things in a southward direction? Take heart! God is working, and He wants to work through you! God is looking for men and women who will serve Him, seek Him, and speak His Word!

Take some time to slowly read through 1 Kings 17:1–6 again. Consider using a different translation as you peruse the passage.

1. Use 1 Kings 17:1 to answer the following directives:
 - a. List any information you glean about Elijah's origin.

- b. How does Elijah introduce himself to Ahab?
- c. What does Elijah announce to the king?
- d. Considering that Ahab is known for his great wickedness, what are your thoughts concerning Elijah's actions?
2. According to 1 Kings 17:2, what happened next?
3. Use 1 Kings 17:3–4 to note and comment on the specifics of God's instructions to Elijah.
- a. What did God promise to do for His prophet?
- 1) What do you find unusual about this?

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

—Proverbs 29:25

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

Jezebel was the daughter of the Sidonian king, Ethbaal, referred to in ancient writings as the king-priest of Phoenicia. With the full support of her husband, King Ahab, Jezebel planned to make Baal the official religion of the nation of Israel in direct opposition to the commandments given by God in Exodus 20:3–17. Baal was the god of nature and fertility, and his title was Prince, Lord of the Earth. It is interesting to note that he was also known as the Lord of Rain.

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

*Look at the
birds of the air,
for they neither
sow nor reap
nor gather into
barns; yet your
heavenly Father
feeds them. Are
you not of more
value than they?*

—Matthew 6:26

4. Note and comment on Elijah's obedience. 1 Kings 17:5

5. Note and comment on how God took care of His prophet while Israel and King Ahab began to feel the effects of the drought. 1 Kings 17:6

6. How does this passage speak to you about:
 - a. God's Word

 - b. God's care

 - c. Obedience

7. What is your greatest takeaway from 1 Kings 17:1–6?

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

The Jewish people depended on the seasonal rains for the success of their crops. If the Lord didn't send the early rain in October and November and the latter rain in March and April, famine would soon devastate the land. But the blessing of the semiannual rains depended on the people obeying the covenant of the Lord (Deut. 11). An extended drought, announced and controlled by the prophet of Jehovah, would make it clear to everybody that Baal the storm god was not a true god at all.¹

—Warren Wiersbe

**FOOD
FOR THOUGHT**

Jeroboam, the first king of Israel after the division of the nation into two kingdoms, introduced the worship of a calf. Every king who followed led the people in the worship of the calf or Baal. As idolatrous and evil as these kings were, Ahab was the worst. Ahab was the eighth king of Israel.