

**The Miraculous Feeding of Elijah**  
**1 Kings 17:1-5; 7-16**  
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One week ago, I saw Space Jam: A New Legacy. It was a live action, cartoon comedy with basketball star LeBron James. I will admit it was a face paced, high tech film.

But what really caught our attention were the film credits at the very end with all the names of the people who had a part in putting together the movie. We marveled that it took so many people to make this film.

I was amazed to learn that it took sixteen cartoon pictures to fill one second on the screen. It was estimated that 30 seconds of cartoon animation would take ten days. Sixty to ninety seconds was six weeks. As we watched the movie run at regular speed, it was seamless, but we had no idea of all that went into it.

And our lives are in a sense like that movie. God puts infinite thought, skill, and careful attention into every detail. As our lives run at regular speed, we have no idea how much God's providence and provision fills every second.

My text is about the Prophet Elijah and he is an example of this. Every detail of his life was ordered by the Lord. And it is the same with us, every detail of our lives is ordered by the Lord as well.

**1 Kings 17:1-5**

**17 Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe<sup>[a]</sup> in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."**

**<sup>2</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah: <sup>3</sup> “Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. <sup>4</sup> You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there.”**

**<sup>5</sup> So he did what the LORD had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. <sup>6</sup> The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.**

7

### **This is the Word of God.**

Our scripture passage takes us into the Old Testament, where Ahab was the king of Israel. Along with his wife, Queen Jezebel, both of them had introduced the worship of the false god of Baal.,

Those who followed Baal believed he was the god who brought rain and bountiful harvests. They believed that Baal’s wife was Asherah, a fertility goddess and the two of them produced an offspring of 70 other lesser gods. The worship of Baal and Asherah also featured male and female prostitutes and there was also an element of child sacrifice.

In droves, the Jewish people left the worship of the Lord God and began to follow this new religion which had a disastrous effect on the people

In order to deal with this apostasy. God sent the prophet Elijah who was a rugged individual, who looked something like John the Baptist to confront Ahab and informed the king there would be a severe drought due to the falling away from the Lord.

Immediately after this, the Lord commanded Elijah to travel some 80 miles to a place called the Kerioth ravine. If you were to go

there today, it now called the Wadi al Yabis and it is hidden away in a valley with a small stream that feeds off the Jordan River.

It was here where Elijah was supplied with water to drink from a brook. There were a number olive trees to provide fruit and big black ravens who brought him food.

God's help is when we least expect it. He provides for us in ways that go beyond our expectations. No matter how difficult our trials or hopeless is our situation, we should look to God's caring touch. We may find his providence in some strange places.

It has been known that Ravens are very clever birds, perhaps on a level with chimpanzees or dolphins. Researchers tell us that they have sophisticated vocal skills, they can solve complex problems and they can remember how people treated them.

At the parsonage on Church Street, I see ravens (crows, crackles) and I can see some of the social skills of these birds) and they do have interesting personalities as they interact with each other.

When our Army unit trained at Ft. Irwin in the Mohave desert, we could see ravens skillfully open discarded MRE boxes and eat all the food that was in them.

So the miraculous feeding of Elijah is very unusual in that God uses a bird to feed his prophet. This shows us that God is not limited in what or whom he chooses as his instruments; he can use anybody or anything to accomplish his goals. Why it is even said in Luke 19:40 that if people do not praise him even the stones will cry out.

Sometime later, Elijah was forced to leave the Keriath Ravine due to the drought and was commanded to travel a distance of 100 miles to Queen Jezebel's hometown called Zarepath. 1 Kings 17:7-16.

**Sometime later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. <sup>8</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to him: <sup>9</sup> "Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food." <sup>10</sup> So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?" <sup>11</sup> As she was going to get it, he called, "And bring me, please, a piece of bread."**

**<sup>12</sup> "As surely as the LORD your God lives," she replied, "I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die."**

**<sup>13</sup> Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. <sup>14</sup> For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD sends rain on the land.'"**

**<sup>15</sup> She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. <sup>16</sup> For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the LORD spoken by Elijah.**

It seemed there were more lessons of trust for Elijah to learn as he experienced more miraculous provisions provided by the Lord. It was the daily miracle of multiplication similar to Jesus' miracle of the loaves and fishes.

However, the prophet Elijah was very much human. He had his share of ups and downs along with his strengths and weaknesses. He had to learn to fully trust God. It didn't come naturally.

Trust is a journey. The Chinese have a proverb that says: "**The journey of a thousand miles starts with one step**".

Sometimes the first step is often the hardest. And when it comes to trust in God, we all have to start small and have to continue to practice it daily in our lives.

The Lord has a purpose for our lives. Our birth, our lives, the time of our death are at God's discretion and mercy. He is in control and does not go on vacation.

All the resources of heaven are at his disposal and He is not caught off guard when trouble comes. We need to trust God with our lives.

We do that when we read his word, keep the commandments and stay close to his side. Once we do that, we can watch him do the miraculous or see him work things out in a natural or an unnatural manner.

This past week my wife and I went to a restaurant to meet one of her classmates she had not seen since high school. To our amazement, there were two of her other high school classmates in the table behind us that she hadn't seen in decades either! This was definitely the hand of God!

There is a song by Stephen Hill Bigger Than Any Mountain **Bigger than all my problems, bigger than all my fears; God is**

**bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see. Bigger than all my questions, bigger than anything; God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see.**

There is another song called

God Will Make a Way.

**God will make a way, where there seems to be no way. He works in ways we cannot see; he will make a way for me. He will be my guide, hold me closely to his side. With love and strength for each new day. He will make a way. He will make a way.**

Like Elijah, let us give our lives for God and place our trust in his providence (behind the scenes orchestrating events) and his provision and meeting our needs.

Let us pray.