

Reflect:

- Many people say that they “believe in God”. What is the difference between superstition and faith?
- How can superstition be turned to faith?
- What is the difference when a person turns from a superstitious “belief in God” to a real faith in the living God?



Fire from Heaven

Eight Studies in the Life of Elijah
from 1 Kings 17 to 2 Kings 2
by **Peter J Blackburn**

2. No Rain!

Bible Reference: 1 Kings 17

Elijah came from Tishbe, a town in Gilead, across the Jordan River. He announced judgment from the Lord – there would be a drought until the prophet gave the word (1 Kings 16.1). (We note the reference to Elijah in the New Testament letter of James – 5.17-18 – where he is seen as an example of the principle that “*the prayer of a good person has a powerful effect*”.)

Reflect:

- Some of the Lord’s judgments are intermediate, others are final. What is the purpose of the Lord’s intermediate judgments? Does 2 Peter 3.9 have any bearing on this question?

Elijah during the Drought

Reading: 1 Kings 17.1-6.

During the drought the prophet himself would need protection, food and water. He was to go eastward to the Cherith ravine where he would be able to hide and have a supply of water. Ravens would bring him bread and meat morning and evening (vv. 2-6). Just what this “*bread and meat*” were or where they came from we are not told. But Elijah, even in his seclusion from mankind, is assured that the living God is Creator and Lord of all creatures. The birds brought this supply at the direction of the Lord of creation.

3. A Meeting! Bible Reference: 1 Kings 18.1-19

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Read: 1 Kings 17.1-16.

But in time the brook dried up. Elijah was directed to stay with a widow in Zarephath in the country of Sidon – that is in the coastal area of Phoenicia to the north of Israel. She was not an Israelite - note v. 12 “*the living Lord your God*”. She responded promptly to Elijah’s request for water (v. 10). But at his request for bread, the story of her extreme poverty and despair came out. There was only enough flour and oil for a meal for herself and her son – and that would be it (v. 12).

Elijah's words brought her a challenge to faith in the Lord. First bring food for the Lord’s servant, then make for yourself and your son. You will then know the sufficient supply promised by God. And that is what happened (vv. 13-16).

Reflect:

- Think of other examples in Scripture where people had to **act in faith** and then experience the promised provision of the Lord. How does this principle of “trust and obey” relate to our own lives?

Elijah and the Widow’s Son

Read: 1 Kings 17.17-24

Some time later events took a sudden turn with the sickness and death of the widow’s son. She suspected that the presence of the man of God had in some way brought punishment upon her for her sins (vv. 17-18) – rather a contrast to our usual self-defensive accusation, “Why has God allowed this to happen to me?”!

Elijah prayed earnestly to the Lord and the boy was restored (vv. 19-23) – note a similar incident in the life of Elisha (2 Kings 4). At this point her fear of the man of God is transformed to faith in Elijah as the man of God and faith in the truth of the word of the Lord that he spoke.