

Obedience Produces Provision

Echo Church | Week 2 | January 12, 2025 | Rich Saunders Jr.

1 Kings 17:1-16 (NKJV)

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.

7 And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

8 Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying,

9 "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you."

10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink."

11 And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."

12 So she said, "As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

13 And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son.

14 For thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.' "

15 So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days.

16 The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.

Introduction:

1 Kings 17 feels less like a history lesson and more like an inside look into how radical obedience and trusting God can transform even the driest of seasons into a testimony of His goodness.

Your obedience in this season is the key that unlocks provision in the next.

When you obey God, you position yourself to experience His provision, no matter how dry, empty, or impossible the situation looks. Your obedience produces divine provisions.

Point 1 - Obedience Opens the Door to the Miraculous

Scripture focus: 1 Kings 17:1-4

God tells Elijah to stand in the courts of King Ahab and proclaim drought—no rain, no dew—until he speaks again. Then God says, "Go hide by the Brook Cherith, and I'll command the ravens to feed you."

A drought is a dry, desolate season.

Logically, it doesn't make sense to go to a brook when there's no water on the horizon, yet Elijah obeys. And don't miss this—GOD used ravens, unclean, selfish birds, to deliver the prophet his provision!

When you obey God, He can use unlikely methods to meet your needs. That person, that call, that opportunity—they might not look like much, but your obedience allows God to use the unusual for the miraculous.

Thought-provoking question:

What assignment has God given you that doesn't make sense yet? What if your miracle is on the other side of your "yes"?

Action challenge:

Step out in obedience—even when you can't see the outcome. Trust God enough to take Him at His Word.

Point 2 - Obedience Sustains You Through Seasons of Lack

Scripture focus: 1 Kings 17:7-9

The brook dries up, but Elijah's obedience doesn't. God tells him to leave and go to Zarephath, where a widow who doesn't even have enough for herself will feed him.

Did you catch that? The brook dries up. The very place God led him to dries up.

Some of us think obedience equals comfort. But just because the brook dries up doesn't mean God isn't still God! A dry brook forces us to stop depending on the resource and look to the Source.

Elijah could've panicked, but he trusted God's voice and moved forward. That's the key to surviving dry seasons—you keep trusting, moving, obeying, even when it feels like you're running on empty.

Life-changing question:

Are you focusing on the "brook" that ran dry, or on the God who provides living water?

Action challenge:

Ask God to shift your eyes from the dried-up places of your life to the new direction He's calling you to. Your next provision could be waiting in your obedience to leave.

Point 3 - Obedience Transforms Scarcity into Overflow

Scripture focus: 1 Kings 17:10-16

When Elijah arrives in Zarephath, he meets the widow gathering sticks for her last meal. She's running on fumes, clinging to the little she has left. But Elijah boldly asks her to bake him a cake first. Can you imagine the audacity?! Yet here's the miracle—the little oil and flour don't run out.

This is kingdom math, y'all! Obedience doesn't make sense.

It didn't make sense for the widow to give first—it likely felt reckless—but her act of generosity released an overflow in her household. Can I preach to someone? Your generosity in scarcity might look risky, **but when you obey God, your obedience invites heaven to move.** What you release in obedience, He multiplies!

Relatable question:

What has God asked you to "give first"? Could your breakthrough be wrapped in your obedience to sacrifice?

Action challenge: Be bold in giving—even when you think you don't have enough. Step out in faith, and trust God to meet your needs and more.

5 Commandments that Unlock Provision

Old Version: Thou Shalt Trust God's Instructions, Even When They Seem Illogical

New Version: Listen Up, Even If It Doesn't Make Sense

When God speaks, follow His instructions, because obedience unlocks supernatural resources. Your provisions may come from a place you never expected.

Old Version: Thou Shalt Go Where God Sends You

New Version: Your Miracle Is in the Move

Don't expect to see God's hand in the wrong place. Sometimes, you'll need to leave the comfort of the brook to step into the unknown. When God calls you to Zarephath (or that new venture, job, or opportunity), trust that His resources are waiting for you there. Your "there" is where the miracle happens! {Miracles aren't always materialistic. Miracles shift the mindset}

Old Version: Thou Shalt Be Willing to Pour Out What You Have

New Version: What's in Your Hand Is Enough

The widow's willingness to pour out what little she had was the doorway to unending provision. Give from where you are, even when it looks like lack. Sometimes, surrendering your resources is the seed for your next harvest.

Old Version: Thou Shalt Remember That Obedience Guarantees Overflow

New Version: Obedience Turns On the Overflow

When you honor Him and follow His Word, He ensures that your spiritual and professional needs are met—day by day. Your obedience today secures favor for tomorrow. Keep showing up, trusting Him, and watching Him multiply what you've stepped out in faith with.

Old Version: Thou Shalt Keep the Faith When the Brook Runs Dry

New Version: Don't Trip When the Brook Runs Dry

Don't lose faith when God shifts your environment or closes a door. The same God who sent the ravens can use a widow. And the same God who provided yesterday is already setting up provision in your tomorrow. Don't doubt in the delay—it's a setup for where He's taking you next.

A dried-up brook doesn't mean God has dried up on you. Sometimes, God lets the brook dry up to reroute you to something greater. When the brook dries, it's not punishment; it's preparation! Trust that God's next provision is already in motion, even when your current source seems lifeless.

Don't Confuse the Resource with the Source

The problem happens when we make the mistake of worshiping the resource instead of trusting the Source. When the brook dries up, it's a holy reminder to fix your focus back on the One who holds every key to provision. Your Source never runs dry.

Faith is less about how loud you can shout in the good times and more about how quiet you can sit in the waiting. The miracle is rarely in the immediate; it's in the process.

God's provision doesn't always come packaged the way you'd expect. Don't put God's provision in a box.

Morning by morning, God showed up. Why? Because God wants us to learn the beauty of daily dependence.

Your Location Matters in Receiving God's Provision

The right location—physically, emotionally, spiritually—is critical for receiving what God has prepared for you.