

The Place, The Plan, The Problem, and The Purpose

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We all face dry periods. Dry periods are a part of everyone's spiritual journey—a truth we often forget.

1 Kings 17:1-7 (ESV) English Standard version

Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.” 2 And the word of the Lord came to him: 3 “Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 4 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. He went and lived by the brook Cherith that is east of the Jordan. 6 And 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 after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

As we look at Elijah we will focus on four truths for him and for us today:

There is a Place, a Plan, a Problem, and a Purpose.

I. THE PLACE GOD ORDAINED

Elijah had just returned from standing before the King Ahab and delivering a message of judgment. Now the next word from God is to tell him to isolate himself.

1 Kings 17:2-3 (ESV) English Standard version

2 And the word of the Lord came to him: 3 “Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 3 “Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook Cherith

The name of the place Cherith means: “to cut off or to cut down.”

The nature of the place was that it is a “hidden place”.

Psalms 23:4

Even though I walk through the darkest valley I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

II. THE PLAN GOD ORDERED

1 Kings 17:4-6

4 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. He went and lived by the brook Cherith that is east of the Jordan. 6 And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

It was a sovereign plan. We don't understand God's plan but it is all ordered by Him.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Psalms 32:8

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

Then it came to a point where all of it ended.

1 Kings 17:7 (ESV)

And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

III. THE PROBLEM GOD ORCHESTRATED

1 Kings 17:7 (ESV)

And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

A Dry Brook – The stream went dry

Do you feel as though you are like Elisha and the stream has stopped? Your soul literally feels dry.

Isaiah 55:1-3

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters, and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. 2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. 3 Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.

IV. HIS PURPOSE WAS REVEALED

A dry brook is not always a sign of God’s displeasure.

Romans 8:28

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

1 Peter 1:6-7

In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

God may be preparing you for a miracle.

After the brook dried up God told Elijah to get up and go and then used him in miracles of provision for a widow, abundance, healing for her son and in the end a proclamation of “you are a man of God and what you say is truth.”

1 Kings 17:9 (ESV) English Standard version

“Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there.

1 Kings 17:24 (ESV) English Standard version

24 And the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.”

You may feel like you are in this isolated place, not understanding God’s plan, experience a problem of being dry. But God has a purpose and that is to use you and for his glory. Keep listening to His voice