

THE LIFE & TIMES OF ELIJAH (Part 2)
“KERITH: BOOT CAMP and BASIC TRAINING”
(1 Kings 17:1-8)

INTRO: Ever been to boot camp? Boot Camp makes us think of shaved heads, dog tags, and fatigues. There a civilian is molded into a soldier through a painful process. No soldier survives the battlefield by sitting in a hot tub and ordering room service. To a certain extent this is also true spiritually. No Christian shines bright for God in a dark world until trained. We all need boot camp and basic training.

REVIEW: God is real and alive, He rules, He has resources.

4 WORDS – Command, Promise, Response, Test (order critical)

I. (vv.1-3) COMMAND

- A. *What To Do* (“leave...hide”) - For his own *protection* from Ahab and continuing *education* from God. Usually when we obey God we expect a reward, but Elijah was sent away to hide. Like being sent back to the minors after hitting a HR in World Series! No doubt alone and scared.
- B. *Where To Go* (“turn eastward, ravine of Kerith, east of the Jordan”)—MAP - Though strange as God’s commands & ways often are, he was to go & hide alone in the shadows, away from family and friends, apart from applause of the crowd. He was shut off from the world and shut up with God.
- C. *What It Says* - To shine bright in a dark world we must be as willing to be set aside for training if we are to be used. This is hard for many. Showing self is easy, hiding self is hard, esp. in a busy world. We need to hear God’s command at times to leave and hide, get alone with God, to examine our lives and to hear from God. It was true of Moses, Paul, even Jesus, and us, too.

II. (v.4) PROMISE

- A. God always enables us to obey His commands. The same God who commands us to go and hide and get prepared, also promises to meet our needs.
- B. Notice end of v.4 “there”. God only promises to meet our needs “there.” No promise if we go to wrong place or run off. *The place of God’s appointment is the only place of God’s provision.* When we follow God’s directions, we get His provisions.

III. (v.5) RESPONSE

- A. (v.5) Elijah’s response was one of no debate. It was *immediate* and *total* obedience. He went “and stayed there” for more than a year.
- B. Obedience is so critical to learn (Heb. 5:8). In the spiritual realm the opposite of ignorance is not knowledge, but disobedience. God and I

have a regular discussion - I remind Him how much I know; He reminds me how little I obey!

IV. (vv.6-7) TEST - Order: Command, promise, obedience, then test.
The moment you step out and obey God you can expect to be tested.

TEST #1: “*Would Elijah trust God’s provision or man’s?*” God’s provision was twofold: Naturally, water from the brook. Supernaturally, God sent ravens to feed him twice a day. But, the world’s provision “dried up”. Hard to believe since he was there in obedience.

“*Why did God allow the brook to go dry?*” Had Elijah sinned or missed God’s will? Neither. God doesn’t just want us to have faith, but for it to develop - and that requires pressure. Ever felt you were in God’s will, yet the brook dried up?

With the world’s provisions gone, would Elijah trust and accept God’s provision of food through ravens? Ravens were big, black, noisy, unclean scavengers. Never despise God’s means of provision. We say we want God to provide, but often fuss over the means He uses. It may be more blessed to give than receive, but it takes more grace to receive than to give (very humbling). Elijah had to learn to trust only in God’s provision. *God’s provisions are always better and last longer than the world’s.* See Job 38:41; Psa. 147:9; Lk. 12:24. If God takes care of unclean ravens, will He not you? God fed the ravens, who fed Elijah!

TEST #2: “*Are you going to trust in the brook or in the God of the brook?*” Brook was dry, now what? The same God that provided the brook now took it away (Job. 1:21). Why? Boot camp at Kerith was over. It was God’s will to come to Kerith, now it was His will to go. God’s will is not static, but dynamic. His plan in progressive.

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NOTE (v.8) When God commands and provides, when we obey and pass the test, he will speak again, “then the Word of the Lord came to him.” We need to obey what we do understand before He will reveal more. When the brook dries up, listen for new instructions. Usually, preparation time.

CONC: Some of you are sitting by a drying brook - financial, vocational, relational, physical, spiritual, and you’re asking, “Lord, why?”. God says, “Just answering your prayer.”

Why did brook dry up? (v.7). No rain! Why no rain? (v.1) and Elijah prayed (James 5:17). Kerith dried up in answer to Elijah’s prayer! Sometimes God’s servants suffer along with the unjust.

Ever prayed like this, “Lord grow me, mold me, change me, use me”, etc.? God is answering your prayer. He puts us through boot camp to train us. Before He can use us at Carmel, He has to train us at Kerith and Zarephath. 1 Pet. 1:7; Jam. 1:2-4. Our faith is so precious to God, He will refine it. Learn all you can; Carmel is coming!