**Week 2 Elijah Committed ° Courageous ° Common**

The scriptures are full of men and women that are known for having done amazing things. David defeated Goliath; Esther saved her people from destruction; Moses went toe to toe with Pharaoh; Elijah stood before the prophets of Baal and called down fire from Heaven. Those aren’t even a handful of the wonderful accounts we read of in the scriptures involving the children of God doing miraculous things. Last week we considered that truth and we discussed the foundation that made those as well as all the other miraculous accounts in the scriptures possible – **Prayer**. This week we want to go a step further and build upon that foundation that we began to lay. While the usual first step was speaking to and/or hearing from God, the next step was to respond in faith, or to **trust**.

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”*Proverbs 3:5-6 (NASB)

**How easy is it to quote that verse with a smile on your face as you talk to *someone else* about their struggle; yet how hard is it to put into practice when we are dealing with struggles and uncertainty in our own lives? Do we truly understand what it means to trust God?**

Elijah’s boldness and zeal accompanied by his desire to see the Lord glorified put him in a troublesome place. While he would have had a bulls eye on him simply for being a prophet of the Lord, that bulls eye would have been magnified infinitely after he appeared to Ahab and pronounced this judgement about withholding dew and rain. Not convinced? Consider the words of Obadiah in 1 Kings 18:10 – “*As the Lord your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent to search for you; and when they said, ‘He is not here,’ he made the kingdom or nation swear that they could not find you.”* Elijah’s decree certainly put him in immediate grave danger, yet God had already foreseen his need and made provision.

***2The word of the Lord came to him, saying, 3“Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 4It shall be that you will drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there.”*** God could have simply given Elijah the command to “go hide himself,” and then in His providence hidden him from danger. But God instead gives specific instruction and in doing so shows Elijah that he isn’t on his own. Not only is he not on his own, God has already provided everything that he was going to need – all he needed to do was **trust** and obey.

We might overlook this, but consider that Elijah had a choice here. He could **trust** and do as the Lord had commanded, or he could set out in his pride, power and wisdom. One way would end in blessing, the other surely would have ended in disaster. One thing we gleaned from the life of David is that all too often, it’s far too easy to rely on ourselves. Verse 5 tells that that Elijah chose correctly.

***5So he went and did according to the word of the Lord, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 6The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook.*** Similar to the provision we saw for the Israelite’s in the wilderness, God does for Elijah at the brook. Food twice a day combined with the water flowing at the brook and Elijah had everything he needed - thanks to the Lord. It is in this time where Elijah begins to learn to **trust** in the LORD for his every need.

Arthur Pink wrote “*Every servant that God deigns to use must pass through the trying experience of Cherith* ***before*** *he is ready for the triumph of Carmel. This is an unchanging principal in the ways of God. Joseph suffered the indignities of both the pit and the prison before he became governor of all Egypt, second only to the king himself. Moses spent one third of this long life at "the backside of the desert" before Jehovah gave him the honor of leading His people out of the house of bondage. David had to learn the sufficiency of God’s power on the farm before he went forth and slew Goliath in the sight of the assembled armies of Israel and the Philistines. Thus it was, too, with the perfect Servant: thirty years of seclusion and silence before He began His brief public ministry. So too with the chief of His ambassadors: a season in the solitudes of Arabia was his apprenticeship before he became the apostle to the Gentiles.”*

**Who else can you think of in the Scriptures that went through a Cherith experience in preparation for something else that God had lined up for them?**

***7 It happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.***

Uh oh!!! What now? Now we get to see what Elijah has learned in his time at Cherith. Was Elijah trusting in the brook, or was he trusting in God? This verse describes a blessing and a curse. First off, by this point it would be understood that there was indeed a drought, which validated Elijah’s words. But along with that, THERE’S A DRAUGHT! Things dry up, things die, and life gets even tougher! Just because Elijah is a man of God doesn’t mean that he’s immune to difficulty. He’ll now be forced to leave his home and again, trust the Lord to provide elsewhere.

One of the unfortunate mentalities that is rampant among Christians is the mentality that Christ is something, but not everything. We say that God is good when the bills are paid and we have money left over. We say that God is good when our ducks are in a row and our lives are in order. But what about when financial pressure is crushing us? What about when the doctor relays life altering news? What about when a loved one passes without warning? Is God any less good in those moments?

I believe that this mentality ultimately reveals that what we mean is “wealth is good,” “health is good,” and “comfort is good.” God is good in all those circumstance, but he’s also good when our brooks dry up. He’s good when people insult and persecute us. He’s good when we lose our job. It’s His nature. God could have given Elijah a river, but instead He sends him to a brook which eventually dries up. Why? To teach him not to rest in the blessing, but in the blesser Himself. When we come to that realization, the cares of this world seem a lot smaller.

**Has the Lord directed you to Cherith? What did He teach you?**

Perhaps you find yourself beside the brook at this very moment and all you can see is the babbling brook slowing to a trickle. Take heart, for our Lord has a plan for you (Rom 8:28) and there is nothing happening in your life that He is not aware of. When He brings you to a place where you can do nothing else but trust in Him, He’s brought you to a GREAT place. Cast your cares on Him. Lean on Him. TRUST Him, and He’ll lead you to a new place with a new provision – we’ll see that next week as we continue our look at Elijah.

Memory Verse: *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”*Proverbs 3:5-6 (NASB)