

HOPE FOR THE HIDDEN

² *And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, ³ Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that [is] before Jordan.*

1 Kings 17:2,3

I. A fabulous launch to ministry / Will you live by conventional wisdom or by the unique guidance of God? (I Kings 17:1)

¹ *And Elijah the Tishbite, [who was] of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, [As] the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.*

A. The Jewish people depended on the seasonal rains for the success of their crops. If the Lord didn't send the early rain in October and November and the latter rain in March and April, there would soon be a famine.

B. But the blessing of the rains depended on obedience to God.
(Deuteronomy 11)

C. Elijah appears before Ahab the king in October about the time of the early rains (there has been no rain for six months from April to October) and the prophet announces that there would be no rain for the next three years.

II. Go hide thyself. / A counterintuitive blast to Elijah's vision. (I Kings 17:2-5)

[1Ki 17:2-5 KJV] ² *And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, ³ Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that [is] before Jordan. ⁴ And it shall be, [that] thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. ⁵ So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that [is] before Jordan.*

A. Elijah was ready for the "no rain tour"

B. A ministry that starts in the palace (or Oval Office) should certainly go on to the masses!

C. Yet for the next three years, the word of Elijah would control the weather in Israel from utter obscurity. God is using you in silence.

III. The Cherith experience / When God closes the door on what you most wanted to do.

- A. At Cherith, God hides you and holds you back from your greatest passion.
- B. It is the place of the brook and not the river.
- C. It is the place where the perfectly trained preacher has no one to hear him.
- D. Ahab immediately began his search to kill Elijah, but could not find him.

IV. In hiddenness your God picture is stretched to the limit. / Elijah was fed by ravens. (I Kings 17:4-5)

- A. Ravens were unclean and detestable food. (Leviticus 11:13-15; Deuteronomy 14:14)

[Lev 11:13-15 KJV] ¹³ *And these [are they which] ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they [are] an abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray,* ¹⁴ *And the vulture, and the kite after his kind;* ¹⁵ *Every raven after his kind;*

[Deu 14:14 KJV] ¹⁴ *And every raven after his kind,*

- B. God provided the food; the birds provided the transportation. God will use dirty birds to bring healthy food.
- C. After a year at Cherith, God suspiciously commands Elijah to travel north east about 100 miles to the Phoenician city of Zarephath, near Jezebel's city in gentile enemy territory!
- D. God then commands him to live with a widow woman and her son. (I Kings 17:8-16)

V. Go show yourself! / What God hides he will in due time reveal. (I Kings 18:1)

And it came to pass [after] many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

- A. God hid him.
- B. God led him.
- C. God fed him.