

Where Are You ?

1 Kings 17:1-4

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I'm glad you could join me today for "It's a Good Life." I trust you're having a good life in the Lord today. We'll be looking in just a few moments in 1 Kings chapter 17. But first, let me invite you to view our website today, www.LRWM.org. There are many things on the website, and one of the best things that I believe we have there is a place for you to leave prayer requests. If you have a request that you'd like for us to pray with you about, please go to the website and look for "Request Prayer," and leave your information there and we will be glad to pray with you about your request today.

Also leave us information on prayers that have been answered in your life. We would also request that you pray for our ministry, Dr. Lewis Woodard Ministries of Fruitland Park, Florida. You can write me also: Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731.

In chapter 17 of 1 Kings and reading in verses 1 through 4, we see, *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. And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that [is] before Jordan. And it shall be, [that] thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.*

And going down to verse 9 now, we see that the Bible continues. *Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which [belongeth] to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman [was] there*

gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

Let's look momentarily now at some of these verses, and today, I want to ask you a question. Are you *there*? In verse 9, it says, *Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which [belongeth] to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.*

In verse 10, it says, *So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman [was] there....* I do not believe that the ravens would have fed Elijah anywhere else, nor would the widow woman have appeared anywhere else except *there*. God did not say, "Elijah, ramble around as you please and I will provide for you."

There was the place of God's will for Elijah.
There was the place of God's purpose for Elijah.
There was the place of God's provision for Elijah.

I want you to notice a few things with me about *there* today. *There* was the place of God's purpose, and God has a *there* for you, somewhere He wants you to be, something He wants you to do. You can never be truly happy elsewhere, nor can you please God anywhere but *there*. You may do lovely things and become a success, but always *there* will be the haunting sense of having chosen life's second best.

Sir Thomas Lipton, English sportsman, won many yachting prizes but never could capture the American Cup. Showing a friend his glittering collection of trophies, he suddenly said with a wave of the hand, "And I'd give them all for the one I didn't get." So, how ever

many of earth's awards and crowns we may gain, if we miss the reward of God's approval, the prize of the high calling of God in Christ, we shall feel at the close of our day that we would gladly give them all for the one we missed.

Woodrow Wilson spoke of being defeated by one's secondary successes. Yes, we are defeated when we choose our own way, whatever we may attain in it, if we miss the purpose of God. And *there* is the place of blessing today.

When Jacob wandered from Bethel and trouble descended upon him at Salem, God commanded him in Genesis 35:1: *And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there....* Now, sometimes we go back to Bethel during the revival, but we do not dwell there. Notice, *there* is not a particular emotional experience. It is simply the place of God's will.

We read that David served his generation by the will of God in Acts chapter 13, verse 36. And in so doing, he proved that he was *there*.

In Colossians chapter 4 and verse 12, Epaphras prayed that the saints might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. In other words, that they might be *there*.

Our Lord could say to the Father, I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, in John 17:6. He was always *there*.

God has a Cherith and a Zarapheth for you. It may be teaching Sunday school. It may be working in the Word of Life. It may be working in the Awana Club. It may be working somewhere in the bus ministry. Some say, "I'll go where You want me to go, dear Lord," but they are not willing to stay where He wants them to stay.

A radio preacher tells of receiving a letter from a young lady who was sure that she could do great things for God if she could move to Pittsburgh but was sure the Lord could do nothing in the small town she lived in. He couldn't do anything with her there. It developed that she refused to work in the small tasks in her home church because she felt too big for it. And we have plenty of Pittsburgh Christians today, eagles sitting on hummingbird nests, always too big for where they are.

In the account of the Great Commission, we overlook the setting in Matthew 28:16. Notice, it says, *Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.* Now, they were in the place of the divine appointing; therefore, they received the divine appointment. Some have had no commission because they are not *there* at the place of His appointing. Some do not listen to the voice of God. Are you *there*?

Notice with me, *there* was the place of God's power. Now, I don't believe that the miracle of the ravens in the meal barrel would have occurred anywhere but *there* in the life of Elijah. Men wonder why they never feel God's power or see any evidence of His working. It is because they are out of His purpose, not in His will. We say what power Elijah had, but he had no power in himself. He was simply *there* in the place of power.

We might say what power that radio has, what power that electric wire has, but they are very frail contraptions. They are simply in the place of power, connected with the source.

When a policeman steps out in front of your car and flags you over for speeding....and I hope that this doesn't happen to you.... it is not his power that does it. You could drive right over him. It is his authority that makes you halt. He represents something greater than himself. So

we are nothing in ourselves, but when we are in the place of God's purpose, we have His power, *because greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world* (1 John 4:4b).

George Muller had no power in himself. He was simply *there*. Hudson Taylor said he once thought God was looking for men strong enough to use, but he learned God was looking for men weak enough to use. The lad with the five loaves and two fishes did not know what he had until Jesus took it and broke it and blessed it and passed it around, nor do you know what you have until you give it to the Lord. Only when we are there in the place of His purpose are we in the place of His power.

Samson did many remarkable things, but he wasn't much. He didn't stay *there*. And notice with me, there is no place just as good as *there*. The place of God's purpose is *there*. We try to strike bargains with God, offer to do something else, seek a compromise or substitute.

A mother told her son twice to sit down and then she made him sit down. He said, "Mother, I may be sitting down, but inside, I'm standing up."

So often, we seem to be yielded to God and living *there*. But there is inward rebellion, and God hates rebellion as a grievous thing. In 1 Samuel 15:23, it says, *For rebellion [is as] the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness [is as] iniquity and idolatry*. Are you *there* today?

Notice, *there* was the place of God's provision. Elijah was taken care of by God at the brook. I believe the ravens brought him the filet mignon of the day. And then we see as we read on that the widow lady brought him food and the barrel of meal never failed. When we are *there*, we are in the place of God's purpose, power, and provision. Are you *there*?

You may be here, but not *there*, in the place of His choosing. What He wants is your yielded life, your will, and the minute you give Him that, you are *there*. We need to go up to Bethel. Are you *there*?

Father, we thank you today for Your Word. We ask You, Lord, that we would be *there*. I pray for those today who are listening who have never trusted You as Savior. May they trust You just now, ask You to come into their hearts. "Lord Jesus, I receive You as my Savior right now." And Father, I pray that those who are listening who are saved, who know Jesus as Savior, would be *there* in the place of Your purpose and Your choosing...not their place of choosing, but Yours. May each of us serve You today. In Jesus' name, amen.

I thank you for listening today, and I invite you once again to view our website, www.LRWM.org. Also write to me: Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731.