1 Kings - Commentaries by Grandma Smith

God's Wonderful Stories: Volume 3, It Rained and It Rained

Article from https://bibletruthpublishers.com/bible-truth-study-bible/btsb

Elijah and his servant climbed to the top of Mount Carmel. Sometimes it's fun to climb a mountain and stand up there on the top and look in every direction. As we look off into the distance, we wonder at the beautiful view, but all too soon we must come down again through the dark forest and over the sharp, gray rocks.

But I don't think it was fun for Elijah up there on the mountaintop that day. He was probably a thin and very thirsty man. You see, more than three years earlier he had prayed earnestly to God that He would stop the rains. And it did not rain for three years, so the trees were all bare and the farms and gardens had no flowers or food.

Why did Elijah pray to have the rains stopped? Because God's people, who should have known better, were worshipping false gods, and this is not only sin, but it brings other sins. God's way for us is the only way that works. And God cares about us, because He loves us very much.

Elijah had already destroyed the evil prophets, and now he reached the mountaintop and sat down with his head between his knees. I think he was praying in this position, and it was a short prayer. It was simply, Send rain! And this is exactly what God was ready to do. But notice that the evil prophets were destroyed first.

Elijah said to his servant, Go and look toward the sea. This was the great Mediterranean Sea, and the sky above it was solid blue with no clouds, as it had been for more than three years.

There is nothing, reported the servant.

Go again, said Elijah, and he repeated this command six times. And every time the servant's answer was the same. There is nothing.

Have you found it the same in your life too? Nothing you hope for comes true. You are ready to say that God doesn't answer. Remember one thing - nobody can break God's promises! If you come to Him, He has promised never, never to cast you out. Jesus has promised cleansing for your sins, peace for your conscience, and everlasting life now and in His home forever. Come to Him now and find yourself richer than all the gold in all the countries of the whole world combined. God gives His blessings freely and forever.

Elijah told his servant to go look toward the sea again - the seventh time -and there it was. . . a cloud the size of a man's hand! That's not very big in the great blue sky, but Elijah knew his God and what He could do with one small cloud.

Elijah said, Tell the king to get his chariot ready so the rain doesn't stop him!

Then the sky was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And it rained, and it rained.

Elijah's prayer was answered. Then he did a surprising thing. He tucked the skirts of his robe (which the men wore in those days) into his belt so he could run, and he ran ahead of King Ahab's chariot all the way to Jezreel.

That was a fast run, and it must have surprised the king. But the queen was not at all pleased . . . no, not at all! She did not want God to interfere with her life.

Are you like that too? Do you say, "I can handle my own problems"? You know, the biggest problem is that you are a sinner. Maybe the queen knew that too, but she still didn't want God or anybody who brought a message from God . . . not even a good message, and she threatened to kill Elijah. She didn't care about answered prayer and the love of God.

Do you? "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). "In this was [shown] the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9). That's the best news anybody ever told. Do you stand with the wicked queen on that subject and say, "NO"? Then you will perish forever in hell. That's where lost sinners will end up. Or will you receive God's love and the gift of His Son and live?

Think About God's Word!

1. Why did Elijah pray to have the rain stopped?

2. Does it ever seem to you that God doesn't answer our prayer? What character did Elijah have to have in order to wait for God's answer to his prayers?

Project: How many years did God wait to fulfill the promise He made to the serpent in Genesis 3?

God's Wonderful Stories: Volume 1, More About the Mother and Her Son

Do you remember the last story about the mother who had enough food for herself and her little son and for Elijah as long as the famine lasted? But life was not all happiness after that. This mother had more to learn. God sent trouble into her life, and she was puzzled and sad and sort of angry. Why would God send such sadness to her after all this?

Her only child was sick, so sick that he stopped breathing. She hugged the little lifeless body to herself and called Elijah, God's messenger, who had a little room in her loft. "O thou man of God," she said, "art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance and to slay my son?"

She was right in saying that God had taken away the child's life, but she did not know the heart of God. Her conscience was troubled by the past sin in her life, and she did not know the God who can bring back life.

Do you? Have you learned that the precious blood of Jesus has power to clean every trace of your sin from God's record? Do you know the Savior who was raised from the dead and who lives in heaven right now? It is wonderful relief and joy to know Him.

"Give me thy son," said Elijah. He took the child from her arms and carried him up to his little room and laid him on his own bed. But Elijah was puzzled too. Why does God send sorrow to His children? Perhaps we don't know now, but we will know someday. Elijah cried to the Lord and then stretched himself upon the child three times. "O Lord my God," he said, "let this child's soul come into him again!" And God restored the child's soul, and he began breathing again. Then Elijah brought him to his mother. "See," he said, "thy son [lives]"!

But while that mother waited with empty arms, she had learned something. "Now . . . I know," she said, "that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." (We must remember that before the Bible was written, God's Word came through His prophets, like Elijah.)

The food supply had not taught her that the Word of God is the truth, but sorrow had taught her. "Now . . . I know," she said. Do you know? Are you sure that those sins of yours are settled before God and that you really believe that the Word of God is truth? If so, your life will have a happy ending in heaven, regardless of what the troubles may be right now. God is faithful. Will you trust Him now?

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28).

"Thy [God's] Word is truth" (John 17:17).

God's Wonderful Stories: Volume 1, Enough Is Enough

It is wonderful to be satisfied. But some of our readers are always hungry, some are always sick, and most of us are always wanting what we do not have. But here is the story of a mother who had enough, even when those around her became thinner and hungrier every day.

The country where this mother lived had had no rain for three years. The crops dried up in the fields and vegetable gardens, cows gave no milk for children and there was no meat for dinner. Nobody had enough food, and there were not many smiles.

This poor, thin mother had one little boy and one big barrel that had only a tiny handful of flour left in the bottom. She also had one bottle with a tiny bit of oil left in it. Sadly, all she could do was to go find two sticks to build a little fire and cook a little pancake for the two of them. After that, their food would be gone and they would starve to death. There was no other hope.

What a sad situation it was for this mother and her little son. They did not have enough. Maybe you have a lot more than she had, but you are going to lose it ALL when you die. What will you have then? Enough? If you have Jesus as your Savior, you have enough. Nothing, not even death, can take you away from the Savior who loves you.

God knew all about this poor mother. As she was finding sticks to build the fire, she heard Elijah at the city gate calling to her. Now Elijah was God's messenger to His people Israel. He asked her for a little drink of water. She turned to get it for the traveler, but then he also asked her for a little piece of bread.

Her answer is surprising because she lived in a country where God was not known, but she said, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake." Her answer was true. And then she truthfully told him about that little bit of flour and oil and her plan for her and her son to eat it and die.

It is wonderful to tell God the truth. Perhaps it would take longer for you to list everything that you have, but you could end up the same way - use it all and then die.

"Make me . . . a little cake first," said Elijah, "and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son."

If you were that mother, would you gasp at such an impossibility? There wasn't enough flour and oil to make a little cake for him to eat and then another one for her and her son to eat. Would you turn away and not listen anymore?

But Elijah's message came from God. God's message to you may be just what you don't want to hear - that you are a hopeless sinner and can do nothing to earn heaven for yourself. Keep on listening! God's Word is true, from cover to cover!

"Fear not," said Elijah. And this was God's promise: "The barrel of meal shall not [be used up], neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord [sends] rain upon the earth." Do you understand that promise? There would always be some flour in the barrel and some oil in the bottle as long as she needed it. God didn't promise a full barrel or a full bottle. Just enough. Enough for each day as it came. If she did not use it all each day, it did not pile up.

You don't need to ask if God's promise came true. His promises always come true. "The barrel of meal [was not used up], neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord."

Each of us who is living right now can say that we have as much of our blessed Lord Jesus as we want, and our lives show how much we want. Our stomachs may have too much or too little, but that is not where our happiness lies. It is the Lord Jesus Himself who is enough for each day and gives us real happiness.

You may wonder why the Bible does not tell us that she shared this food with her neighbors who were starving too. Perhaps they were not willing to believe in the living God and His promises. I cannot share my salvation with others, but I can tell them to come to Jesus for their own salvation. Will you come and believe? He has promised, “Him that [comes] to Me I will in [no way] cast out” (John 6:37). “These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life [salvation] through His name” (John 20:31).

We will tell you more of this mother and her son in the next story.

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