

A Spiritual State

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Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 00] Well if we could this evening with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, 1 Kings and if we read at verse 1 of chapter 17.

1 Kings chapter 17 and verse 1. Now Elijah the Tishbite of Tish in Gilead said to Ahab, as the Lord the God of Israel lives before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years except by my word.

You know when we think of Elijah, we think of him as one of the all time greats. We think of Elijah as this wonderful prophet of the Lord. We think of him as a faithful servant of the Lord.

And I suppose you could say that Elijah, he's, well in my mind anyway, he's right up there with Moses. Because Moses appeared alongside Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration.

And when we think of Elijah, we think of him as a man who was fearless in his faith. We think of him as a man who was strong in his convictions. We think of him as someone who was willing to stand alone.

[1 : 28] We think of Elijah as a man of prayer, a man of passion, a man of purpose. We think of Elijah, when we think of him, we think of him maybe as a super Christian who walked closely with the Lord all the days of his life.

And Elijah, sometimes in my mind, I think that this man walked so closely with the Lord and he was so holy that the Lord took him straight to heaven. He didn't need to die. You know, is it true to say that when we think of Elijah, we think of him as a man who lived up to his name?

Because the name Elijah, it means my God is Jehovah. My God is Jehovah. And when we think of this man, we think of him as someone who is so unlike us.

And yet, when the greatest commentary of the Bible, which is the Bible, when the Bible gives commentary on Elijah, the Bible tells us that Elijah was a man just like us.

In his New Testament letter to struggling Christians who are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ, James, you remember, he concludes his letter by reminding these persecuted Christians that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

[2 : 50] And James, he illustrated this by saying to these persecuted Christians that Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed fervently that it might not rain.

And for three years and six months, it did not rain. And we're told that when he prayed again and heaven gave rain and the earth bore its fruit. And then James, he actually applies this to the Christians of his day.

And he says to them, My brother, if anyone among you wonders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wondering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

And you know, that's what Elijah was trying to do. Elijah saw his people, the people of Israel. Elijah saw them wandering away from the truth of the Lord.

And Elijah's mission, his purpose, was that he sought to bring these people back in order to save their souls from death. As a prophet in Israel, Elijah sought to call the Lord's people to turn away from their idolatry and their disobedience.

[4 : 05] And once again, turn back to the Lord and serve him. But you know, as we consider this opening passage in our study of the prophet Elijah, we are actually given the spiritual state of the kingdom of Israel.

And the truth is, the kingdom of Israel was in a spiritual state. They were in an absolute mess. And they needed deliverance.

But there would only be deliverance when they turned from their idolatry and they turned back to the Lord. And there are three things that I'd like us to draw out from this passage and see the

spiritual state of the kingdom of Israel.

I want us to see, first of all, spiritual darkness. Then spiritual drought. And then lastly, spiritual deliverance. Spiritual darkness, spiritual drought, and spiritual deliverance.

So we look first of all at spiritual darkness. Spiritual darkness. Look at chapter 16 and verse 29. It says there, The story of Elijah begins with King Ahab.

[5 : 35] King Ahab succeeded his father, as we read there, three times. He succeeded his father, Omri, to the throne of the northern kingdom of Israel. And we're told that this took place in the 38th year of King Asa.

King Asa was the king over the southern kingdom of Judah. And King Asa is mentioned here not only to give us a timeline as to when King Ahab took the throne in the northern kingdom of Israel. But also King Asa is mentioned here in order to remind us that the nation of Israel at this point in time is a divided nation. The nation of Israel, it wasn't a united kingdom.

It was a divided kingdom with two different kings. Israel was the northern kingdom. And it was the larger of the two kingdoms. And then there was Judah in the south.

That was the southern kingdom. It was the smaller kingdom. But the amazing thing is Judah. Judah had the temple. Judah had Jerusalem. Judah had the Ark of the Covenant.

[6 : 40] Judah was the more faithful kingdom. Because even though they turned away from the Lord. And even though they were exiled into Babylon. The Lord never cast them off. But for the kingdom of Israel.

The northern kingdom. They were a kingdom in a downward spiral. And they were going further and further away from the Lord. And further away from his covenant.

And that's what we're told in verse 30. Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord. More than all who were before him. Israel was a kingdom that was progressing in sin.

They were progressing away from the Lord. And away from his word. And away from his covenant. But as you remember. It wasn't always like this.

This wasn't always the history of the people of Israel. Because you'll remember that the first true king in the nation of Israel. And before it was divided. The first true king was King David.

[7 : 40] David was the man after God's own heart. David was the Lord's anointed. And as the Lord's anointed. David he captured the Ark of the Covenant from the Philistines. He established the city of Jerusalem as the worship center for the nation of Israel.

David led the Israelites in worship. In worshiping the Lord. The covenant king. David was the man after God's own heart. And he took his responsibility seriously.

Because he led the people of Israel to love the Lord. And to worship the Lord. And to follow the Lord. And to obey the Lord. And Solomon after him sought to do the same.

Solomon you'll remember he built the temple in Jerusalem. And when the temple was completed. You can read it in the beginning of the book of Kings. The glory of the Lord came to dwell in the temple at Jerusalem.

It was a wonderful moment in the history of the Israelites. But Solomon had a problem. Solomon had a problem. And back in chapter 11.

[8 : 46] We're told that King Solomon loved many foreign women. And we're told in that chapter. The Lord had said to the people of Israel. You shall not enter into marriage with them.

Neither shall they with you. For surely they will turn your heart away after their gods. But Solomon clung to these in love. And his wives turned away his heart after other gods.

And his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God. As the heart of David his father. It was Solomon's love for foreign women.

That eventually divided the nation of Israel. Because Solomon's two sons. Rehoboam and Jeroboam. Rehoboam became the king over the southern kingdom of Judah.

And Jeroboam was made king over the northern kingdom of Israel. But it was as a result of Solomon's ungodly example. That the successive kings over the kingdom of Israel.

[9 : 49] That they married foreign wives. And you know it should always be a warning to us. That our Christian witness is very important.

How we live our lives as Christians. As Christian parents. As Christian workers. Wherever we are. How we conduct ourselves by our character. And our conversation. Is so important.

Because we are an example. Just like Solomon was. We are an example. Not only an example in our godliness. But sometimes we are also an example in our ungodliness.

And you know. God forbid. That we would be an ungodly example. To others by our character. Or our conduct. Or our conversation.

God forbid. That we would lead others astray. By the way we live our lives. And by the way we conduct ourselves. As Christians. God forbid. That our character. Or even our conversation.

[10:49] Would be a stumbling block to others. And their spiritual growth. And you know. That's what Paul actually warned Timothy. He said to Timothy. Be an example.

Be an example. In speech. In conduct. In love. In faith. In purity. And for King Solomon. And King Jeroboam. And then King Omri.

And then King Ahab. They progressed further and further away from the Lord. And yet they were meant to be the spiritual leaders. In the kingdom of Israel.

They were meant to be an example to the people. Because it was the responsibility of the king. It was the responsibility of the king. To lead the people of Israel. To faithfully worship the Lord.

But since the time of King Solomon. There was this progression of sin. Away from the Lord. Away from his word. And away from his covenant. There was this progression.

[11:48] Away from the light. Into a deeper and deeper. Spiritual darkness. And so when it comes to King Ahab. Listen to what the Bible has to say about him.

It says in verse 30. And Ahab the son of Omri. Did evil in the sight of the Lord. More than all who were before him. And as if it had been a light thing for him.

To walk in the sins of Jeroboam. The son of Nebat. He took for his wife Jezebel. The daughter of Ethbal. King of the Sidonians. And went and served Baal. And worshipped him.

He erected an altar for Baal. In the house of Baal. Which he built in Samaria. And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord.

The God of Israel. To anger than all the kings of Israel. Who were before him. You know the Bible repeats the fact. That Ahab did more to provoke the Lord.

[12:44] Than all the kings who were before him. By marrying Princess Jezebel. The daughter of a foreign king. And making her Ahab's foreign wife.

Who worshipped and served foreign gods. Ahab. He may have secured political stability. Ahab may have guaranteed economic growth for his kingdom.

But in doing so. He forfeited his soul. And gained spiritual darkness. Because when the spiritual leader rejects the Lord.

And bows down to other gods. And even. He even built a temple in Samaria. Which was the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. He built a temple.

For this God Baal. And bowed down to him. In God's holy land. Do you know when the king does that? When the spiritual state of the kingdom of Israel.

[13:44] Is doing these things. It's in a state of spiritual darkness. And you know we can see the same thing happening in our own nation today. When the leaders of our nation reject the Lord.

When the media rejects the Lord. When our leaders and our media. Encourage our nation to worship every other god. And every other idol. Instead of the Lord.

We're lost. And you know the idol of the 21st century. It isn't Baal as it is here. The idol of the 21st century. Is self.

Do you know we're obsessed with promoting self. Providing for self. Pleasuring self. And when self is to the fore. Instead of the Lord. When self is first.

Instead of seeking the Lord first. We will do whatever it takes. Until we are pleasing self. And like it was for the kingdom of Israel. And like it is for us.

[14:42] As the united kingdom of Britain. When the leaders of the kingdom. They may secure political stability. They may be able to. To guarantee growth.

Economic growth. But in doing so. They are forfeiting their soul. And they are gaining spiritual darkness. It's a warning. But you know that spiritual darkness.

It leads to a spiritual drought. That's what we see secondly. Spiritual darkness. Then spiritual drought. Look at verse 1 of chapter 17.

We're told. Now Elijah the Tishbite. Of Tishb and Gilead. Said to Ahab. As the Lord. The God of Israel. Lives before whom I stand. There shall be neither dew.

Nor rain these years. Except by my word. You know the moment. Ahab married Jezebel. She became queen. Over the northern kingdom of Israel.

[15 : 42] And Jezebel. She not only moved into the palace. With her newfound king. But all of her gods came with her. Jezebel had lots of baggage. And as we shall see in the coming weeks.

Jezebel had lots of demands. Over her new king and husband Ahab. But as we said. The spiritual darkness. Overshadowing the kingdom of Israel. It led to a spiritual drought.

But the spiritual drought in the kingdom. It was expressed by the Lord. To his people. By a physical drought. And the message of this spiritual drought.

Was brought to King Ahab. By the Lord's prophet. Elijah. And you know. It's at this point. That Elijah. He just bursts onto the scene. There's no introduction.

We don't know where Elijah's come from. We don't know anything about his background. Or his upbringing. We don't even know where Elijah met. With King Ahab. All we know is that this man.

[16 : 40] Elijah the Tishbite. All we know is that he is the Lord's prophet. But as it often is with the Bible. Personal details aren't important. Because the Lord's message.

Is what's important. And the message Elijah had come to declare to King Ahab. Was that the Lord was going to inflict covenant curses. Upon his covenant people.

In the kingdom of Israel. Because of their covenant unfaithfulness. And idolatry. And you know.

That was Elijah's role. As the Lord's prophet.

As a prophet. Elijah's role. It was twofold. He was to be a foreteller. And a foreteller. As a prophet.

Elijah was not only to foretell future events.

But he was also to foretell. Elijah was to be a preacher of the gospel. He was to be a herald of the truth. He was to be a minister of God's word. As a foreteller.

[17 : 39] Elijah was to address the people of his day. And proclaim God's truth. And herald God's covenant. And challenge any who worshipped false gods. And bow down to idols.

Elijah's office as the Lord's prophet. Was to keep order. In the kingdom of Israel. And ensure that the king. And the covenant people. Worshipped the Lord.

But if they turned away from the Lord. Then the Lord's prophet. His responsibility was to call them back. To covenant faithfulness. And that was Elijah's responsibility.

He was to remind the king. And he was to remind the people. In the kingdom of Israel. That their priority. Is to worship the Lord. And to serve him. But because Ahab.

Had bowed down to Baal. And married this foreign idolater. Queen Jezebel. And set up temples. In his own kingdom. In order to lead the covenant people. To worship this God Baal.

[18 : 39] Because of all that. The Lord sends Elijah. With a message. To declare to King Ahab. That the Lord is going to inflict covenant curses.

Upon his covenant people. In the kingdom of Israel. Because of their covenant unfaithfulness. And idolatry. And you know. When you look at the situation. That was escalating.

In the kingdom of Israel. You could say. It was a covenant crisis. It was a covenant crisis. Because here was the Lord's covenant people. They are the direct descendants.

Of Abraham. The man whom God entered. Into that covenant with. And as we were singing. In Psalm 105. The covenant that the Lord made with Abraham.

Was a binding covenant. It was a covenant that would stand. Forever. For all generations. But that covenant had conditions. The Lord had said that obedience.

[19 : 38] Would bring blessing. But disobedience would bring cursing. And when the Lord gave the law to Moses. These covenant blessings and curses. They were spelled out to the people of Israel.

The Lord warned his covenant people. That if they turn away from the Lord. And turn to idols.

Covenant blessings. Would be removed. And covenant curses.

Would follow. The Lord said. In Deuteronomy 11. Verses 16 and 17. Take heed to yourselves. Lest your heart be deceived.

And you turn aside. And serve other gods. And worship them. Lest the Lord's anger be aroused against you. And he shut up the heavens. So that there be no rain. And the land yield no produce.

And you perish quickly. From the good land. Which the Lord is giving you. And that was going to be the covenant crisis. In the kingdom of Israel. All because of this covenant curse.

[20 : 40] King Ahab and the people. They had provoked the anger of the Lord. By bowing down. To worship Baal. And here we see Elijah. The Lord's covenant prophet.

Pronouncing the covenant curse. To the face of the covenant king. He says in verse 1. As the Lord the God of Israel lives. Before whom I stand.

There shall be neither Jew. Nor reign these years. Except by my word. But you know what's interesting. Is that this covenant curse.

It was far more than just judgment. Upon the Lord's covenant people. Because by saying that there would be no Jew from the earth. And no rain coming from heaven.

It was going to make the covenant people. Realize that. Baal or Baal. He was just a dumb idol. And I say that because.

[21 : 38] Baal was the God of fertility. He was the God of growth. You worshipped Baal if you wanted a child. You worshipped Baal if you wanted a good crop in the coming year.

Because Baal. He promised to provide growth. He promised to provide blessing on your family. And on your land. Baal promised to provide good weather. Good growth. And a good harvest.

If you just bow down to him. But what Ahab didn't realize. Was that when Elijah pronounced this covenant curse. On the covenant king. And his covenant people. The Lord was going to remove all the blessings.

From them. Until they would turn back to him. It wasn't just going to be a bad season. There was going to be a drought. In the kingdom of Israel.

Lasting three and a half years. The spiritual darkness. Had led to a spiritual. The kingdom was in a mess.

[22 : 37] But then look at what the Lord says to Elijah. In verses two and three. Of chapter 17. The word of the Lord came to him. Depart from here. And turn eastward.

And hide yourself by the brook Cherith. Which is east of the Jordan. What's surprising about the Lord's command here. When he told Elijah to go and hide by the brook Cherith.

What's surprising is that he told him to go and hide. But what Elijah wasn't to hide. He wasn't there to hide. Because King Ahab was. Had this warrant out to arrest him.

Or because Queen Jezebel wanted him dead. Like she killed many of the Lord's prophets. The Lord told Elijah to go and hide by the brook Cherith. In order to heighten the Lord's judgment.

Upon the kingdom of Israel. It's all judgment. That's what's coming here. You know Dale Ralph Davis. He states in his commentary. He says. The disappearance of Elijah.

[23 : 38] Spells the absence of the word of God. From the life of Israel. Israel's judgment. Is the drought of the land. And the silence of the Lord.

Israel's judgment. Is the drought of the land. And the silence of the Lord. And you know. We have to wonder. What spiritual state.

We are in. As individuals. As a congregation. As a presbytery. As a denomination. As a church. As a nation.

What is our spiritual state. Are we in a spiritual state. Are you in a spiritual state. Has the Lord removed his covenant blessing.

Because of our faithfulness. To his. Our unfaithfulness. To his covenant. Has the Lord become silent. Because we have ignored his word.

[24 : 36] And stopped speaking to him. Has the Lord removed his voice. Because he's not first in our life. Has the Lord brought spiritual drought. Because we're in spiritual darkness.

What is our spiritual state. And you know the progression. We're being confronted with here. In the life of King Ahab. And the people of Israel.

It's a progression of backsliding. That's what they were doing. As a kingdom. They were backsliding. Further and further away. From the Lord.

Because the spiritual state. Of the kingdom of Israel. It was being overshadowed. By spiritual darkness. Which led to a spiritual drought. And what they needed.

Was spiritual deliverance. They needed spiritual deliverance. And that's what I'd like us to consider lastly. Spiritual deliverance. So we've seen. Spiritual darkness. Spiritual drought.

[25 : 35] And spiritual deliverance. Spiritual deliverance. Look at verse 4. Of chapter 17. The Lord says. You shall drink from the brook.

And I have commanded the ravens. To feed you there. So he went and did according. To the word of the Lord. He went and lived. By the brook Cherith. That is east of the Jordan. And the ravens brought him.

Bread and meat in the morning. And bread and meat in the evening. And he drank from the brook. And after a while. The brook dried up. Because there was no rain. In the land. With the kingdom of Israel.

Now in a spiritual. And physical drought. Food was scarce. And water was limited. But for his own purposes. And glory. The Lord had to preserve.

Elijah. Elijah's work was not yet completed. And until. Elijah's work was done. The Lord was going to see to it. That Elijah. Would be kept.

[26 : 34] And you know. It's the greatest comfort. In the word of God. That we are kept. By the power of God. And we are kept. Until our work here on earth. Is done. Because when our appointed task.

Whatever that is. When it has been accomplished. In our life. The Lord will take us home. To be with himself. And he will take us. In his time. And by his chosen means.

But Elijah's work. As we can see. It's just begun. So the Lord wanted to provide. For his servant. And we see that. When the Lord commanded. His prophet Elijah.

To hide by the brook Cherith. The Lord also commanded. The ravens. To feed Elijah. Both in the morning. And in the evening. And it's remarkable. That the Lord used.

An unclean bird. To feed his righteous servant. The raven. Was religiously unclean. It wasn't to be eaten. Because it was a scavenger bird.

[27 : 30] And most people. They viewed them as pests. Because they would steal food. Or they would steal anything. They could get their claws into. The ravens. They were viewed. And they're still viewed. As a nuisance.

They're an unclean bird. And you know. It's interesting. We would refer to a. Group of birds. As a flock of birds. But when you see.

A group of ravens. They're referred to as. Unkindness. That's what you call. A group of ravens. You call them. Unkindness. And yet. What we read here.

Is that when the Lord. Commanded these. Unclean scavengers. When he commanded them. To feed. His righteous servant. They were very kind. To Elijah.

They were very kind to him. But notice what we're. Told in verses 7 and 8. That when the brook dried up. The Lord told Elijah. To move on. And in verse 9.

[28 : 26] And the Lord says. Arise. Go to Zarephath. Which belongs to Sidon. And dwell there. Behold. I have commanded a widow. To there. To feed you. You know.

It's amazing to see. That for a nation. That have. They had. As a nation. They had failed. To care for their prophets. Which they were meant. To do. And yet. The Lord. Sent unclean ravens.

And then. He sent an unlikely widow. To feed. And take care. Of Elijah. He sent. Unclean ravens. And an unlikely widow. And this widow.

Was. She was unlikely. Not only because she was poor. But also because she was foreign. She wasn't an Israelite widow. She wasn't a Jew. She was a Gentile. She was.

An outsider. You could say. In fact. The widow of Zarephath. She was from Queen Jezebel's. Home. Territory. She lived in the center. Of Baal worship. And yet.

[29 : 20] That's where Elijah was sent. And Elijah's were told. He obeyed. He went to this widow of Zarephath. And you know. This widow of Zarephath.

She was famous. Because even Jesus mentions her. In Luke chapter 4. When Jesus is pronouncing judgment. Upon the Israelites. For rejecting him.

As the Christ. And the true prophet of God. Jesus. Says to the people. He says. I tell you. There were many widows in Israel. In the days of Elijah. When the heavens were shut up.

Three years and six months. And a great famine came over all the land. And Elijah was sent. To none of them. But only to Zarephath. In the land of Sidon.

To a woman. Who was a widow. The point that Jesus was making. Was that. The Lord sent Elijah. To Zarephath. Beyond. The border.

[30 : 15] He went. To Zarephath. As a symbol of judgment. Upon the kingdom of Israel. He went. As a symbol of judgment. That they weren't willing.

To look after their own prophets. But you know. Elijah also went. As an act of grace. He went. As an act of grace. Towards those. Who were over the border.

Those who were the Gentiles. So it was not only a message. It was a message of judgment. To the Lord's people. But it was a message of grace. To the Gentiles. That the Lord's grace.

Is going to be extended. Beyond the boundary of Israel. To all the Gentile nations. Of the world. And you know. That was the great covenant promise. That every nation. Tribe and tongue.

Will praise. And magnify the Lord. But you know. When Elijah met this widow. From Zarephath. The drought. Had affected her too. She and her son.

[31 : 08] They had nothing left. They were just going to eat. What was to them. It was going to be. Their last supper. This. They were just going to eat. And die.

They're going to prepare this food. Eat it. As it says. And die. And yet Elijah. He asks for the first bite. Of her last supper.

And you know. It seems cruel. But we're told in verse 15. That the widow of Zarephath. Obeyed and did. As Elijah said. And we're told. That the jar. And the jug.

Were never empty. The jar and the jug. Were never empty. And is that not what faith is. Because faith realizes. That you're completely empty.

Faith receives. The word of God. And faith rests upon that word. Day by day. Faith realizes. That you're completely empty. Faith receives.

[32 : 03] The word of God. And faith rests upon that word. Day by day. And that's what this widow did. She realized. That she had nothing left. Nothing left to cling to. She realized.

She had nothing left. And then she received. The word of the Lord. From the prophet Elijah. And she rested upon it. Day by day. Until the end of the drought. And the jar.

And the jug. Were never empty. It's wonderful. The jar and the jug. Were never empty. And you know my friend. Sometimes the Lord. The Lord will do that. In our life.

Sometimes the Lord. Will empty us. He will empty us. In order to fill us. The Lord. Will make us realize. That we have nothing. Or no one left.

To cling to. Except him. The Lord. Will cause us. To receive the word. Day by day. And rest upon it. And you know.

[33 : 01] That's what we're to do. Something we need to. Recapture. In our day and generation. That faith realizes. That you're completely empty. Faith receives. The word of God. And faith rests.

Upon that word. Day by day. You know. As the old saying goes. I'm sure you've. Heard. Reverend William McLeod. Saying it often.

When the cupboards. Were empty. The churches were full. But now. That the cupboards. Are full. The churches are empty. You know. There's never been. A through or statement.

But you know. It's when the church realizes. Or when our churches. Become empty. That we need to realize. That we have nothing. Or no one to cling to. Except. Receive the word of the Lord.

And rest upon it. Day by day. We need to go back. To this word. And you know. Believe it or not.

That's what Elijah. Had to learn. He was a man. Just like us. He had to learn it. And that's what the widow.

[33 : 56] Of Zarephath. Had to learn. Because when her son died. And I know I'm just skimming through all this. But I'm trying to draw out the theme. When her son died. When the widow of Zarephath's son.

Died. Which was reflecting. The spiritual darkness. And the spiritual drought. Of the kingdom of Israel. He was only delivered. By the word of the Lord.

There was resurrection. And restoration. By the word of the Lord. And that's what happened. In your life. And my life. There was resurrection. And restoration. From spiritual darkness.

And a spiritual drought. By the word. Of the Lord. And that's how this chapter. On the spiritual state. Of the kingdom of Israel. That's how it concludes. We're told in verse 24.

And the woman said to Elijah. Now I know that you're a man of God. And that the word of the Lord. In your mouth. Is truth. The chapter concludes. With a Gentile.

[34 : 51] Someone who's outside. The kingdom of Israel. She's confirming. To the Lord's prophet. Elijah. That he has the word of the Lord. In his mouth. He is the only means.

Of resurrection. And restoration. For the kingdom of Israel. He is the only means. Of spiritual deliverance. For people in bondage. She says.

Now I know that you're a man of God. And that the word of the Lord. In your mouth. Is truth. And you know. Like Elijah. We are prone to forgetting. That the word of God.

Is the power of God. Unto salvation. It's quick. It's powerful. And it's sharp. Sharper than any two-edged sword. And so we don't need gimmicks.

We don't need to change the message. We don't need a different approach. But like Elijah. We must realize. That we have nothing. Or no one left to cling to. Except to receive the word of the Lord.

[35 : 48] And rest upon it. Day by day. That's what will bring deliverance. That's what brings hope. That's what brings salvation. The word of the Lord. And that's what Elijah had to hear.

He had to go to another land. To hear it. Now I know that you're a man of God. And that the word of the Lord. In your mouth. Is truth. And you know. It's that statement.

That prepares the way. For dealing with the spiritual state. Of the kingdom of Israel. And that happens in the next chapter. The spiritual showdown. On Mount Carmel.

Which Lord willing. We'll consider. The next week. So in chapter 17. There's a spiritual state. It's a spiritual darkness. And a spiritual drought.

But the Lord has called Elijah. To provide. A spiritual. Deliverance. So may the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray.

[36 : 46] O Lord our gracious God. Forgive us we pray. If we have wronged thee in any way.

We realize Lord. That thou art one who is holy. And thy covenant is through. And help us Lord to be faithful. Help us to see the error of.

The ways of Israel. And to realize that we are not. To turn to other gods. Or to other idols. But that we are to seek first. The kingdom of God. And his righteousness.

Help us Lord to be faithful. Help us to stick close to thy word. Help us Lord to walk in the light. As thou art in the light. And to live lives that bring glory to thy name.

We thank thee O Lord for thy word. That it challenges us. That it reminds us that we are those. Who have been called. We are called out. That we are the church of Jesus Christ. And that we are to be the light of the world.

[37 : 45] And the salt of the earth. Help us then we pray to be faithful. To be faithful to thee. To bring glory to thy name. To seek to extend thy kingdom.

Lord that thou wouldst use us. For thy glory. That thou Lord wouldst use us. In our different homes. Our different families. Our different spheres of work. That we would be witnesses for thee.

To the ends of the earth. O keep us Lord we pray. Bless us together we ask. Help us in our study. To keep learning more and more. About this wonderful saviour. Who does in us and for us.

Exceedingly abundantly above all. More than we could ask. Or even think. Keep us then we pray. For Jesus sake. Amen. We're going to bring our service to a conclusion.

By singing. The words of Psalm 89. Psalm 89. We're singing from the beginning.

[38 : 48] Down to the verse mark 4. Psalm 89. Another psalm that reminds us.

Of God's covenant faithfulness. And this is. A psalm that reminds. Psalm 105 was about. God's covenant with Abraham. And Psalm 89 is about. God's covenant with David.

And it's the same covenant. The covenant of grace. God's mercies I will ever sing. And with my mouth I shall. Thy faithfulness make to be known. To generations all.

For mercy shall be built. Said I. Forever to endure. Thy faithfulness. Even in the heavens. Thou wilt establish sure. Down to the verse marked 4. Of Psalm 89.

To God's praise. God's mercies I will ever sing.

[39 : 43] And with my mouth I shall. Thy faithfulness. God's mercies I will ever sing.

In the heavens. To generations all. Thy faithfulness.

It may even say. For his faithfulness. In the heavens. For Garrus. Thy faithfulness in the heavens, the wilt establisher.

I with my Joseph one have made a covenant graciously.

Unto my servant, whom I love, to David's form have I.

[41 : 02] That I thy seed establish shall forever to remain.

And will to generations of thy throne build and maintain.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.