

What Do We Do When the Brook Dries Up?

1 Kings 17:1-7

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.

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.

6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

- The Lord told Elijah to tell Ahab that it's not going to rain for years.
- It was the Lord also, Himself that told Elijah to get up, turn east, and go hide thyself by the brook Cherith.
- Elijah must have thought man this is great, I speak and the rain stops.
- I get up in the morning and the ravens bring me bread and flesh, I drink from the brook Cherith, and I do the same thing in the evening, how could it get any better than this.
- God blesses me in the morning and He blesses me in the evening, He speaks through me and the rain stops, what a powerful, anointed man of God I am.
- But then all of the sudden the bible says, the brook dries up.

- The brook God told him to go to, the place God ordained for him to be sustained, the place that he was to go to for his strength and refuge, it dried up.
- Let me say to those of you who are content to just come to church and go home the same way night after night, this teaching won't mean much to you.
- But for those of us who desire a closer and more personal walk with God, this message is key to understanding the ways of God.
- There are some ministries sitting on these pews that have but all dried up because you cannot understand God's way.

But before God can trust you to be used greatly by Him you must understand **“What to do when your brook dries up”**

- How many tonight know what basic training or boot camp is all about?
- I'm sure for all the ones who have been in the military; they still know what boot camp is all about.
- Some of us who has never been, say we know what boot camp is all about, but only those who have been can truly say they know what boot camp, or basic training is all about.
- In my mind and tell me if I'm wrong, but I believe:
- Boot camp for most is the first time you really get away from home.
- It is a time where you learn all about discipline.
- You find out real fast what a full day of work is all about.
- It is also a place where the military train their soldiers into what they want them to become.

- It's a place where the men and the boys are separated.
- It's not a place for sissies, and babies and complainers, and mommy's boys.
- Boot camp is a place where you learn about war, if you're not successful in boot camp, you will never be successful on the battle field.
- I'm sure in boot camp a soldier is stripped away of their self-will.
- They learn what's important and what's not so important.
- It's a place where young men and women lose their rebellion.
- They learn what it is to follow orders, and follow leaders all the way to death if need be.
- They find out at boot camp that you cannot retreat, you cannot give up, and you cannot stay home if you don't feel like it.
- Boot camp is a place where you do what you are told and you say yes sir to the command.
- You may say Pastor what are you getting at?
- I'm telling you that all training, the discipline and the pressure that a soldier goes through; it makes that soldier strong.
- It makes him stronger, more disciplined and more mature.
- Can you do that by reading a book, No!
- Can you do that by just watching, No!
- Can you do that from home in your easy chair, No!

- A soldier has to leave the comfortableness of home, and be put in a place all alone, where it's dry, and it's lonely, and it's personal.
- I'm here to tell you that boot camp is a place where the military sends their soldiers to teach them a whole lot, in a short amount of time.
- But what the soldier does learn in a short amount of time is essential to his survival on the battlefield.
- I can honestly say, since I've been in the ministry and especially since I've been a pastor I've been to boot camp.
- I thought I knew what living for God was sitting in a pew but friend only when you leave and step out of your comfort zone will you ever experience God's boot camp.
- And then what will you do when you find yourself there alone, in a fox-hole somewhere all by yourself, just you and God and the Devil.
- Will God be able to trust you, will you murmur and complain, or will you say I need my and say mommy.
- I submit to this congregation that God has a boot camp for all His soldiers.
- It's not voluntary, it's not optional, it's not suggested, but it's mandatory.
- If you're going to fight in God's army and you're going to be successful on the battle field with Satan and all of his imps, you're going to have to make it through God's boot camp.
- Here's where we find Elijah.
- When we think of Elijah, there are usually two events that come to mind.

- We all remember how he was carried away into heaven in a chariot of fire.
- And we also know Elijah by his great victory on top of Mount Carmel.
- But let me remind you all of something, before we can be trusted to stand on Mt. Carmel, we must first pass by our own dry brook.
- I'm here to tell you good people of God that have a desire to be used by God, that if God is going to use you, He must first train you and He must also break you.
- It's the divine order of breaking bread.

Luke 22:19

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them.

- Notice He took the bread, He gave thanks, He broke it so that He could give the bread.
- It's no different with us, God wants to take us from where we've been, and he wants to anoint and bless you with His spirit, but then He must break your spirit and your desires and your dreams and ambitions, and then when your vision becomes His vision then He can give you to the whole world.
- There are no short-cuts, there is no easy way.
- Let me warn you, living for God is not easy, it is not for babies, God is going to try each and every one of us in the fiery trial of adversity.
- That's why ask, "What do we do when our brook runs dry"
- Before it's all said and done, God is going to find out if you really love Him or not.

- He is going to prove you, test you, and try you.
- And each and every one of us will be tried differently.
- Like it or not, there are foundational lessons that we must all learn.
- Lessons like trust, and faith, and obedience, and faithfulness.
- It is so much easier living for God, when trust, and faith, and obedience, and faithfulness in God's Word is not an option for the saint of God.
- I spend most of my time of Pastoring in trying to get Holy Ghost filled men and women of God, to live and trust God's Word.
- When you realize I have no other place to go, when you make up in your mind, I will not go back to the world.
- When you make up in your mind that I am not following man but I am following God.
- Here me when I say, before God can put you on the battlefield as a soldier; He must send you to boot camp.

I know we don't like to think of it in those terms, but it stands to reason before God can really use us, He must first remove from us all that hinders His will from being done.

- Elijah has just stood before the King of Israel and delivered the message of judgment that God had given him.
- Now God says to Elijah go hide thyself.
- Me and you would want to stick around for all the accolades and thanks and hand clapping and praise.

- But God says, all right you did what I needed you to do, now get out of here, go hide yourself.
- It seems to me that God would want to keep Elijah in the face of Ahab.

But, God's ways are not our ways!

You see, God has a plan! **He wants to transform Elijah from Elijah the Tishbite, into Elijah the Man of God.**

To accomplish this, God is going to have to send Elijah to boot camp.

1 Kings 17:2-3

*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.*

Notice the Lord sent him to the brook Cherith, that word **Cherith means "to cut off, or to cut down"**.

- In other words God has cut off Elijah from public view so that He might cut him down to size.
- We don't like that lesson do we?
- Nobody likes to be cut-off or cut-down.
- One of the hardest lessons each of us must learn is that before God will ever use you for His glory you must first pass by Cherith.
- He must hide you away and cut you down so that His image may be revealed in you.

Do you realize God has a message for the whole world to hear and the only way of getting that message to the world is through you, so the only thing that is hindering God's message is our flesh.

More often than not, we have too much pride and jealousy, and hatred, we have our own little quirks, and attitudes and ideas, God needs to kill our flesh so that all the world sees when they look at us is Him.

- Let me just say this if you've been saved for 5, 10, 15, 20, or 30 years and you are the same person you were when you first got saved, something is wrong.
- My wife tells some that she has been married to 3 or 4 different men in her 25 years of marriage to me.
- I can truly say I am not the same man I was 25 years ago, I'm not the same man I was 5 years ago.

God has taken me to my brook of Cherith.

- Notice what the word says, God says to Elijah go to Cherith, it is a hidden place, by nature a hard and lonely place.
- Here Elijah would be removed from the spotlight.
- Here God would begin a work in his spiritual life, here he would have alone time with God, here God would find out if Elijah loved him or if it was just words.
- God needs to know, what you will do in your hidden place, how will you live when it's just you and God?
- I've often said the true test of a man's character is how does he or she live for God when they're all alone.
- Powerful lessons can be learned in the hidden places.
- Lessons God can learn about us and lessons we can learn from God.

In the hidden place of Cherith is where Elijah became a man of God.

- It was here that he learned to trust God totally.
- It was here that Elijah was forced to learn to lean on the Lord.
- You see, before we can ever give out, we must first take in.
- Before God can pour anything out of our vessels, He must first put something in them our vessel.
- We all need to learn the value of the hidden life.
- You see, there is a part of us, the world sees, and a part of us they do not.
- But can I say the part they do not see is the part that defines us.
- Let me tell you preachers something you can tell if a preacher has prayed or not.
- Study is good, research is good, but prayer is what delivers the study and research in an anointed way
- Singer, you can tell whether you've prayed or not.
- Too many are trying to do God's service, without prayer and it does not work.
- The only thing that can destroy the yoke is the anointing of God and God is only going to anoint those He can trust with the anointing, and God gets His trust in us by our prayer life.

If you preach an hour you need to pray 2, if you watch T.V 3 or 4 hours a night you need to pray at least ½ hour.

- A praying person is not a proud and boastful person.

- A praying person does not need his name mentioned.
- A praying person understands all the glory goes to God.
- A praying person has the right attitude.

Matt 6:6

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly .

Why is it that we don't like alone time with God?

Do you realize that time spent alone, in the presence of God is what brings the glory?

- I want to tell you something, a life that is lived in solitude before the Lord is a life that one day, be used to bring Him great glory.
- You see, God wants us to come to the place where we are found faithful in the hidden life.
- When we are found faithful there, He will expand our sphere of influence and bring us out of the hiding place.

Luke 16:10

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Cherith is a place that you feel that you are being passed over, it's a place where you feel at times that I'm being left out, it a place where you feel forsaken.

But never forget, God sent you there and God knows where you are.

He sent you there and He sent you there for a reason, so that He might reveal you in His time!

1 Kings 17:4

And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

Cherith was a specific place.

- It was the only place Elijah could be and be right with God.
- If he had gone anywhere else, he would have starved to death.
- God had ordered provisions for Elijah, but He had ordered them to be delivered to Cherith.
- It was the only place to be.
- When the Lord sends us to a difficult place in life, there is the tendency to want to be somewhere else.
- After all, who likes pain? Who likes sickness? Who likes financial trouble? Who likes to struggle?

What we must learn is that if God sends us to a Cherith, He knows what He is doing.

- The only place for us to be is where God sends us!
- If we find ourselves in a difficult situation, the best thing we can do is to submit to it as the will of God for our lives and learn to trust Him while we are there.
- Elijah is sent to the middle of nowhere to hide.
- But God's call is always accompanied by God's provisions.
- He will never send you to a place in life that He does not give you ALL you need to make it through that place.
- His place is always complete with His provisions for that place!

- Notice that before the need arose, God already had the provisions in place.
- When He formed the world, He made sure to form that little brook just for Elijah.
- Before He told the prophet to go to Cherith, God had already commanded the ravens to take care of God's man.
- This lets us know that nothing catches God by surprise.

When this came up, God did not wring His hands in despair and say, "Oh no! What am I going to do?"

- How will I keep this man alive?"
- We need to remember that our Cherith always comes equipped with God's provision.
- We serve a God, Who is already alive in our tomorrow!
- Before the dawn ever breaks tomorrow, the Lord is already there and He has already placed what I need in the path I will take.
- Regardless of the circumstance or difficulty, God has already prepared the path that I will take.
- God prepared the brook and He prepared the ravens.
- But did you know that ravens are scavengers.
- They feed of the flesh of the dead.
- Yet, God used them to bring life sustaining food to the prophet of God.

- Have you ever wondered where they got the food?
- Maybe from Ahab and Jezebel's table!
- Can I say to someone tonight, your wondering and worried about your enemies and your so called friends, but friend God is big enough to use them to bless you.
- Never forget that God knows what you need, and He has your provision.
- If He has too, He will move heaven and earth to see that your need is met.
- He knows where you are and He knows where the provisions you need are.
- He will direct your path to the place where He can meet your need.

Phil 4:19

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

- Note the phrase, "So he went and did according to the word of the Lord."
- When God called, Elijah simply stepped out in faith and obeyed.
- That is the secret to surviving your Cherith experiences!
- Coming to the place where we do not question God, but when He speaks, we respond by doing what we are told to do.
- You see, when we are on God's payroll, He will pay our way.

Matt 6:25-34

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

- When you choose to walk a path He has not ordained, you will pay your own way.
- This is the lesson of Cherith.
- God's servants must come to the place where they trust God alone and they must trust Him absolutely.
- Elijah had nothing but the promise of God, yet for him that was sufficient to let him know that all would be well.
- Notice that God was in absolute control of the situation.

- The ravens did as He had commanded them and they brought bread and flesh to the prophet twice per day.
- The brook was there as well.
- All of this was ordered by the Lord to teach the prophet that God was in absolute control of what happened.
- When the Lord puts you in a place where you can do nothing but trust Him, He had done you the greatest favor that He can extend, outside of salvation.
- When we come to the place where we are trusting Him and Him alone, we have reached a great level of growth.
- The whole purpose in God's plan was to help Elijah come to the place where he could trust God for one day at a time.
- I would imagine that there was some fear in the prophet's heart that first evening.
- Would the ravens appear?
- Would there be flesh and bread in the morning?
- But, as the days passed and God proved Himself to be faithful and trustworthy, Elijah learned to walk by faith.
- Friends, that is where the Lord wants to bring us as well!
- The Bible tells us that "the just shall live by faith."
- Church, "What will you do when your brook runs dry"?
- Imagine how Elijah must have felt as he watched that stream grow smaller each day.

- One day, its voice wasn't as loud as it had been the day before.
- As the days passed, the little brook began to get narrow.
- Then, one day it was all gone! Nothing was left but a dry, cracked stream bed.
- This happens to us as well! That job that we have invested our lives in dries up.
- The husband or wife that we thought would always be there walks out on you.
- Our health is attacked, our finances has run out, the car won't run, the children that use to be just little angels now won't listen, the pastor dies or walks out, a church split, no friends, no ministry, no place to be.
- What will you do when your brook runs dry?
- Regardless of the circumstances, When we are faced with these kinds of trials, we must never lose sight of two great truths
- The God Who provides the water can also withhold the water.
- He is in control of our lives!
- As Elijah was about to find out, God had another place already prepared for him.
- So it is with us!
- When our brook dries up, God has another channel of blessing already lined up for us!

A dry brook is not always a sign of God's displeasure.

- Certainly, God uses the events of life to chasten us when we walk outside of His will.
- However, there are times when He will let your brook dry up in the midst of your serving Him.
- Sometimes, the brooks of life dry up because God is pleased with us and desires to take us on to new and better things.
- He knows us and He knows that we would be reluctant to leave a place where everything was going perfectly.
- Therefore, He will dry up our brook causing us to be willing to go where He leads us.

Sometimes, God allows the brook to dry up because we are guilty of trusting the brook more than we trust Him.

- Elijah must have felt as that brook dried up before his eyes.
- I wonder if he felt abandoned and forsaken? I wonder if he felt that God has somehow let him down?
- Have you ever felt abandoned by the Lord when one of your brooks dried up?
- I just want you to know that God hasn't forsaken you.
- In fact, when you are standing there looking at a dried up brook, you are more His concern then than at any other time. Friend, He cannot forget you.
- God will often allow His people to sit by a drying brook.
- When it happens, and it will, never believe for an instant that God has somehow forgotten about you or forsaken you.

- He has promised to take care of you.
- Like Elijah, when your brook dries up, God has a new channel of blessing that He will reveal in His time.
- Elijah's dry brook came about because God was pleased with the prophet.
- That doesn't make sense from a human standpoint, but it is true nonetheless!
- We need to come to the place where we understand that God dries up the brooks of life because He has something even bigger just down the road.
- Sometimes the brooks dry up because you have done everything right.
- God has just chosen that dry brook as the vehicle to move you to a new place of blessing.
- Remember that God took Elijah to boot camp.
- He is training a prophet.
- He is building a man of God.
- God knows that before Elijah can stand in power on Mt, Carmel, he must first be broken at Cherith.
- His goal is the same in our lives today.
- Many of us have attended the same university that Elijah attended.
- We are the alumni of Dry Brook University.
- Others are just enrolling.

- Brooks are beginning to dry up in your life.
- You wonder what to do and how you will make it.
- My advice today is that you come to the place early where you roll everything off onto the Lord and you trust Him to take care of you.
- If you are a child of God, may He help you to come to the place where you realize that everything that happens in your life is part of God's plan for you.
- And that nothing can happen in you or to you that He does not allow.