([00:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=pGfOYiO4iOKRBFWZGFamgj8r7O_E-r1NMMSqBDydYJVC5ll8XbNnpfR7N9I32CHmlBRcoWnVr8W9MsuOJ7CWCkax4Iw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1.28)):

Our scripture this evening comes from first Kings chapter 17, verses one to 24. First Kings 17, beginning to read at verse one:

([00:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=e4qy6f6yne52NqIb8NTTbd1Jnpn0yDlKZWejrbiw7noRDQCDLLQ295LauaVVi16a0CJWOBtJgLwOcDP-k7DPgT6wrB4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=16.53)):

*Then Elijah, the Tishbite from the sojourners in Gilead said to Ahab, "By the life of Yahweh, the God of Israel, before whom I stand, there will not be dew nor rain these years, except by my word." Then the word of Yahweh came to him saying, "Go from here and you shall turn yourself eastward. And you shall hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is near the Jordan. And it shall be that you can drink from the brook; and the Ravens, I have commanded to sustain you there." So he went and did according to Yahweh's word. He went and stayed by the brook Cherith, which is near the Jordan. And the Ravens kept bringing him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening. And he would drink from the brook. And after some time the Brook dried up, for there was no rain in the land.*

([01:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=03jdoKaYj6N96tbA5CqJBs0s-KDE06jdl_qqEFre__QjATpOWL3Lv3nih_-p8hsQrYlHcxJEPS3103S05TYtTl_alY0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=66.54)):

*Then the word of Yahweh came to him saying, "Get up, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there. See, I've commanded a widow woman there to sustain you." So he got up and went to Zarephath. Now he came to the entrance of the town, then, why, there was a widow woman gathering wood. And he called to her and said, "Please get me a little water in a container for me to drink." When she went to get it, he called after her and said, "Please bring along a piece of bread for me." Then she said, "By the life of Yahweh, your God, I have nothing baked...only a handful of flour in a jar, and a little oil in a jug. And see, I'm gathering a couple of pieces of wood. And I shall go and make it for myself and for my son and we shall eat it and die." "No," Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go. Do as you say; only make me a little cake first from it, and bring it out to me. And for you and your son, you may make something afterwards; for, here's what Yahweh, the God of Israel says. 'The jar of flour will never come to an end, and the jug of oil will never be empty until the day Yahweh gives rain upon the face of the ground.'" And she went and did as Elijah had said; and she ate....he and she and her household for days. The jar of flour did not come to an end, and the jug of oil was not empty, according to the word of Yahweh, which he spoke by the hand of Elijah.*

([02:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=BWI3oDzbYvFBAA0tsEBSMXDkLaxNQKZr0Ibu0qGrimBZtllTsJX234Pl8FuDO-oG2sHC4YXKPTh0wsI06SpSsoN06mA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=164.53)):

*Now it came about after these things that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill, and his illness became very severe to the point that there was no breath left in it. And she said to Elijah, "What connection must I have with you, O man of God? You've come to me to make known my iniquity and to put my son to death." Then he said to her, "Give me your son." And he took him from her lap and brought him up to the upper room where he was staying and laid him on his bed. Then he called out to Yahweh and said, "Oh, Yahweh my God. Is it even upon this widow with whom I'm sojourning, that you have brought disaster by putting her son to death?" And he stretched himself upon the child three times. And he called out to Yahweh and said, "Yahweh, my God, please let the life of this child be restored to him." And Yahweh listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child was restored to him, and he came to life. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down from the upper room into the house and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said to her, "See, your son lives." Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of Yahweh in your mouth is reliable."*

([04:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=UC88i7xAVfe_2cSiMkSdJD0KNr-GYlVPFWBnj56DYa8yYDlQOiLAL4keEZl2DsUL8t2zy9gf4qIQb9GO-ISy79tVBbQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=245.61)):

This ends the reading of God's written word.

([04:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=5zXM5ux3uMEGBesaGXIUny-LdkzWpJW-Vg4v1wBfzpxgMWiJXxegtHM8sDPw-2sKmyGHc68c1biQrt5671Ny6jBDamw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=252.07)):

Well, it was in September of 1698, when the Czar came back home to Russia; and his cronies and boyars, and so on, heard that Peter the Great had returned after something like 18 months in the West. He had been in Europe finding out about ship building and, technological advances, and so on. And so, after 18 months he was back home and all of these leaders and cronies came back to welcome him in . And then, while all this was going on (and, I suppose a few hugs, and so on) Peter brandished a long, sharp barber's razor, and began to cut off the beards of all these fellows. You say, "Well, they didn't have to submit to that, dig!!" Well, Peter was six feet, seven inches tall. You didn't resist Peter very easily. So, there you go. Hacking, and cutting, and so on; and when everything's done, all these fellows have bare jaws, and chipped chins, and all sorts of things---of hair that's gone that had been growing since puberty. And some of them thought that shaving was a mortal sin. But, you see,Peter had been to the West, and he had become convinced that some of the customs and the morays that they followed in Russia were putting them behind---that they were the laughing stock, and and people ridiculed them, and so on, for being so backward. And Peter was sure that he wanted to a new era. Times had changed. And that's what he was going to do. So, the clean shave was a clear sign that things had changed.

([06:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=JZ_nlPyL3-ALq7biKwwup6M-QqOPQJiFMlY-NarzvettcLDwtPrqulm98k0Sr-i3K0IzAold7g8Wrp7zWt-jsCfn34M&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=370.82)): ***Background: The descent Into Depravity***

And we already saw in first Kings, as we dealt with that passage, which we really need for our background in chapter 17. In chapter 16 verses 29 to 34 we dealt with that and it was like that in Ahab's time in Israel: it was a huge shift. It was a new age in a bad kind of way; and that's what that passage indicates. There were these changes that came about. It was a unique time. It was a time, as we said, that was evil in its intensity. Ahab was more evil than any king. up to that time. His wife Jezebel was a rabid evangelist for Baal worship. Ahab himself built a house for Baal and joined Jezebel in Baal worship. The word of Yahweh was despised, et cetera. It was a time when the days were evil, like they had not been before. **We used the analogy with you of the time when** **Jeroboam's false religion, that was like moderate paganism** **(that's like drinking polluted water).** **But Ahab's and Jezebel's paganism, that's severe paganism (that's like sucking raw sewage).** And that's the sort of thing---**there was a new order of things, and it wasn't a good order. Things were different; *the days, were evil.***

([07:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=LAp39sxq1OBl9THW9t__1JTUZqJbkCcA5fb8o1cj1a94wKxtpQlJxesoOfBFL888ilsaydIKlkJmEtX_NMu1fAEPPYE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=454.52)): ***Evil Days: 1) God Suddenly Responds With Vigilance***

And so, we come to first Kings 17. And the question is**, "When the days are evil, what do we see about our God?"** And I think chapter 17 answers that. What do we see? **Well, first of all, we see the sudden appearance of God's vigilance.** Look at chapter 17, verse one: the sudden appearance of God's vigilance. "Then Elijah, the Tishbite, from the sojourners in Gilead, said to Ahab, 'By the life of Yahweh, the God of Israe,l before whom I stand, there will not be Dew nor rain these years, except by my word.'"

([08:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-QS2HA4k4GbkSSXFyURaAI0ZWEhCrjoWBBsNT7LVgxY5EPY0bCIcJlsFzCUXBLo18nz16BNnb8IG01EaeUsAgq750J8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=492.04)):

**Notice the suddenness of Elijah's appearance**. You can't really grasp it, unless you go back to chapter 16, 29 to 34; and some of the worst divisions in our printed Bibles are chapter divisions. You've got to have them, and so on, but there's something that goes on in your head when you have those few centimeters of white between the end of a chapter and the beginning of another; and you tend to do a mental disconnect. But you have to come right from chapter 16, verse 34 (with all of that baggage) right into chapter 17, verse one*: "Then Elijah the Tishbite from the sojourners in Gilead said to Ahab."* There he is. Right out there in front of Ahab!! You don't know anything about him; never heard of him before; didn't know he existed; but, ***BOOM***, there he is. No introduction, no warmups, no details, no bio, nothing about his lovely wife, Jeannette and their darling, twin sons, Jared and Jeremy (Uh, that's my crew!). But you know, that's what they..... Uh, don't know his hobbies. Don't know if he preferred to chew Juicy Fruit or Density? We don't know anything about him! He's just there suddenly, nose to nose, eyeball to eyeball with Ahab.

([09:31](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=tzClcU0SeAtcQ3F7_SHGqOJR2g5685VlEoPzOaOJ_FhpnqfmGFqjdBjcDI7oQX6qcefFflBNdGtW5ClhpemRhknWaP8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=571.76)): ***Elijah’s Sudden Appearing: The Significance of His Words***

**Now, notice the significance of his words.** *"There will not be dew nor rain these years, except by my word."* Well, what does that mean? Well, that means that's a **judgment on Israel**---that's one thing. Back in the book of Deuteronomy, for instance, chapter 11, verses 16 and following, Yahweh, had said to Israel through Moses*, "Take care, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside to serve other gods and worship them. Then the anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the land will yield no fruit. And you will perish quickly off the good land that Yahweh's giving you."* So when the heavens are shut up, and there's no dew nor rain, it's a judgment that covenant curses are coming upon Israel for their unfaithfulnss to Yahweh. That's part of it, but there's also more. **It's also a put down of the pagan god/deity Baal's prowess***. "No dew nor rain these years, except by my word."* Now, you remember that Baal, in the mythology theology of Canaan, was the fertility god. He was the storm god, the God of lightning, and thunder, and rain who caused fertility in the earth, and the crops, and so on. I mean that was his specialty. That was his major at 'Deity University'. That's was his prime stuff. And Elijah says, *"There'll be no dew nor rain these years, except by my word."* What's that like? That's like Yahweh saying, "I'm going to shut Baal's spigot off. And you're gonna see what a real non-god he is; that he (Baal) can't come through year after year. I'm going to expose it!" So it's a put down of Baal and his worship.

([11:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=kPpzWhFZ5NED_NLiQ-_GSBTibvXoNEgi3Kxq0-uJT9caOTxd9UC-aMW0xAP9aHnqzNU_qyRs0KcAPDsM1pjFcOGKS8A&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=700.94)): ***Elijah’s Sudden Appearing: God’s Solace and Comfort***

Now, I want you to see here in verse one, though, is **the solace and the comfort in this sudden appearance of God's vigilance and of Elijah's sudden appearance**. You see, in chapter 16, verses 29 to 34, things can't get much worse than this...... And then, here's Elijah!

([12:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=9E72kAz9DAq0lwJ7EPSaV6lMGzvKP787mUcr3k4yBpb6ZkLCUwZ1GeYsDJRLdWWBaqAhSvwXC_jiB2wC8fF59C79XVE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=726.25)):

God isn't caught off guard, is he? God wasn't caught unprepared for this, was he? **He had his man right where he needed to be at the right time, didn't he?** Seems to me, that's helpful to know. There's something in the course of the history of World War II that we don't often hear about, probably because it happened on the day before Pearl Harbor day, and we are so taken up, rightly, with December 7th, 1941 that we don't give a thought about December 6th, 1941. Because, on that day, it was just a few days before the Germans had been able to sight through their field glasses (they were in the suburbs of Moscow)....they were able to sight the spires of the Kremlin. They thought they were going to be able to clean up pretty soon. But the Russians, despite their tremendous early losses to the Germans had amassed (and this is something William Scherrer passes on)...had amassed in great secrecy, before their capital, a force more formidable than the Germans could possibly imagine: seven armies, two cavalry tank corps, 100 divisions in all, of fresh troops equipped for fighting in the bitter cold and deep snow.

And on the morning of December 6th, 1941, it hit the Germans on a 200 mile front in front of Moscow, drove them back with heavy losses, and doomed their chances of taking Russia out of the war. They didn't know it, but the defense was ready. That's the point here? When the days are evil, the defense is ready. Yahweh's not caught unprepared. Ronald Wallace, I think, has put it very well, so I'm just going to quote it. He said, "We need not despair when we see great movements of evil achieve a spectacular success on this earth; for, we may be sure that God in unexpected places has already secretly prepared his counter movement. At the height of the triumph of evil, God will be there ready with his man and his movement." And he was...and he will be. The sudden appearance of God's vigilance.

([14:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=FXblg0ls_wO2UlnDUIRljY3XYmLKb6RX0Iw8jH4hnYmpMW8om-XHbQsjxxAuD-xOx41ZjkqHHXy4SV5Rh-vuISK_Vnc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=888.68)): ***Evil Days: 2) The Sad Silence of God’s Word***

**Now *secondly*, you see here, the sad silence of God's word**: verses two through the first part of verse 10. Let's look especially there at just verses two, and three, and four to begin with. *"Then the word of Yahweh came to him, that is Elijah, saying, ‘Go from here. And you shall turn yourself eastward, and you shall hide yourself by the Brook Cherith, which is near the Jordan. And it shall be that you can drink from the Brook; and the ravens I've commanded to sustain you there. So we went and did, according to Yahweh's words.’"* Now, in verses two and three, **Elijah is not just supposed to go hide himself in order to be protected from Ahab**. Now, that's probably part of it; because by chapter 18, verse 10, Ahab is obviously wanting to apprehend Elijah and run him down, and so on. So, there was a sense of danger to Elijah. Whether there was just at this point, we don't know. But, part of it could have been to protect Elijah, but that wasn't all of it. And certainly it wasn't in order to give unemployed ravens something to do, though that took place, and so on. But, there's more involved here than meets the eye. Sometimes that's the case, isn't it? There was a time when a 23 year old university graduate hit

the best seller list with one of his books. It was called 'Why England Slept'. It was by John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 23 years old. And it got to the best seller list. Now it's true that it had to have a columnist kind of reorganize and restructure it; and had to have a ghost writer clean up the grammar and make the connection and give coherence to it. But, nevertheless, a 23 year old gets a book on the best seller list. How did that happen? Well, obviously because the book sold a lot of copies. How else is it going to get on the best seller list? But there's more than meets the eye. Joseph P. Kennedy, JFK's father, happened to buy between 30,000 and 40,000 copies of the book. Now they might be sitting in a warehouse somewhere, but he bought them. And so it got on the bestseller list.

There is more involved than meets the eye sometimes. And that's what I think is going on here with Elijah going into hiding. There's a Dutch scholar by the name of van Vir, who says (I tend to think he's right) that **Elijah's going into hiding is more significant than just trying to get away from Ahab's clutches.** Because who is Elijah? Elijah is the bearer of Yahweh's word. **And when the bearer of the Yahweh's word goes into hiding, it means that Yahweh's word goes into hiding and is not being given to Israel**. But where does it end up going? Well, it ends up going to pagansville---to Baal country, up to Sidon and Phoenecia to the North, and to Zarephath, to a pagan widow woman who's probably a worshiper of Baal; and that word eventually goes to her. **But it's taken away--- Yahweh bypasses Israel with his word and extends it to a Gentile or a pagan.** But when Elijah, as the bearer of Yahweh's word, goes into hiding, it's as if Yahweh's word itself is being hidden from Israel, and taken away from them. That's something that the prophet Amos said some years later. Amos 8:11, *"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord Yahweh, when I will send a famine on the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but hearing the word's of Yahweh."*

([19:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=5G9NWm-ZFUT6WcKePRfUL-A_P14hdfrDfaYOhJkpp57YY16BH9oIjrdzYf_z1ZE1jY8dDKyXtvhIeKLVpxMAzOYlnI0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1150.41)):

**Sometimes Yahweh takes his word away from his people when they're not paying heed to it. And that's part of his judgement on them.** We usually don't think of God's judgment that way. We usually think of the judgment of God and catastrophics or fireworks and destruction. But no, no, those can be very quiet. About 15 years ago, in the Jackson Mississippi newspaper, there was a little clip that spoke of ***haya fungus*** in the national forest in eastern Oregon.

It was slowly weaving its way through the roots of trees. It had been doing so for centuries, and had become the largest living organism ever found, at least at that time. It's called popularly by the term the **'Honey Mushroom'**. It started, allegedly, from a single spore that was too small to see without a microscope. And it has been spreading its black shoestring filaments through the roots of trees for an estimated 2,400 years, killing trees as it grows. And it now covers (or at that time covered) 2200 acres. It's very *quiet*. It's *lethal*, but it doesn't make any racket. **And sometimes God's judgment is that way. It may simply be his *hiding* *and taking away his word from his people*, as at least he did temporarily here with Israel, when he sent Elijah into eclipse for this time.**

([21:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=xIVUMEUFOnSPpW7aOympCayZ37TBH31D5JiqS9TjqL49lsFLeRt18l8pBIKcGcpkfRcOkvEwhmkvhLjTNnuLUYfbwFQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1260.99)):

Can that happen today? Because now, you know, we're post Gutenberg, and we're post digital, and all that. We now have God's word, don't we?? So, God *can’t* take it away from us, can he? Oh, yes, I think he can. You know, **there are whole denominations of churches who think very lightly, really, of the authority of the Bible.** And they don't think that the Bible is a trustworthy record of God's written word. And because of that, it's reflected in their pulpits. You can go into their worship services, and you will not hear an explanation and application of the word of God. Has God taking his word away?? Or, there may be professing individual Christians who may attend Bible believing churches; but they attend public worship, and they have little hunger or thirst for the word of God; and they have little desire for the scriptures. **And quietly, perhaps, the Lord just takes away any appetite. And He And takes his word from them.** The strange, sad silence of God's word; the judgement on his people.

([22:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-rSTkcVUaHoxG7Bxy2fSIt-YDwWhXnZMRET7G5Ogj75-EoT8MdU0VmeO0PcL8vrlHWEWY2H30Bv9CpX8amaxvaWIkcA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1357.17)): ***Evil Days: 3) The Strange Twists of God’s Ways***

**Now *thirdly*, you see God at work here in the strange twist of God's ways.** I want you to look at verses 10 to 17, the strange twists of God's ways. You notice, as we just look at the text from verse 10 on there, he, Elijah goes up North on the Eastern end of the Mediterranean to Phoenecia, and so on, to around Sidon to this village, Zarephath. And he comes into the town, and there's this widow woman.

***The First Movement: Desperate Situation of the Widow!***

The Lord had said, ***"I've appointed a widow woman there to sustain you.”*** It almost sounds like an oxymoron, because a widow woman would do well in that time to sustain herself, let alone anyone else. So that didn't sound like a very promising affair, but Elijah went. And there you see, in verses 10 to 12, desperation. She's gathering a couple of pieces of wood, and he says, *"Get me a little water."* She goes to get a little water. He says, *"Oh, by the way, bring me a little bit of bread or food."* And she says... she goes on, *"Oh, in Yahweh's name, by the life of Yahweh your God, I have nothing baked. I only have a handful of flour in a jar, and a little bit of oil in a jug. And this is literally the last supper. I'm getting enough firewood to cook the last meal for my son and I; and we'll eat it and die."* That's her situation. **So there's *desperation*. That's the first movement here.**

([24:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=1OF6gl1Ccp1efkbUhtBUmjAn7bXWpJjYUSdxOVfZjnOOU3iAX4h7sgSGABj-K0Q9oGyh020KTmiUPD-yZ3JQ-rBXSwo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1449.98)): ***The Second Movement: A Promise to the Widow!***

**Then you have promise: verses 13 and 14.** *"So Elijah said to her, 'Don't be afraid, go do as you said, only bring me out a little cake first, and then you can make for you and your son.’"* And why does he say that? Why does he put her to the test like that? Notice the first word of verse 14, *"For,"*......here's the reason, here's the rationale...here's the supporting argument.... *"Here's what Yahweh, the God of Israel says, 'The jar of flour will never come to an end, and the jug of oil will never be empty, until the day Yahweh gives rain upon the face of the ground.'"* **So, she goes from desperation to promise**. This was really a call to **conversion**, in verse 14. She's being called to lean on the word of the God of Israel. This woman is a pagan. She's probably a Baal worshipper. She's a Phoenician. She lives in pagan land, and so on. And she is been called to lean on Yahweh's promise,...and she does! **She believes a naked promise**. You get into chapter 18, and you realize that Israel has to be......it has to have the reality of Yahweh demonstrated in wild and living color. **But this woman actually believed a sheer *promise* of Yahweh and acts on it!**

([25:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=2xJkjNy9Saq0neMgZOECQLOKHdxbLd2ZsRUKPIrU3wNSheTGIJU50Iq37BRYEdzx9NFUoP5jotYXXhuZWxQ3_0tCq8o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1535.15)): ***The Third Movement: The Benefit Realized by the Widow***

**And, you see the benefit. So you move from desperation, to promise, to benefit in verses 15 and 16.** And she ate; he, and she, and her household ate for days. In verse 16, *"The jar flour did not come to an end, and the jug of oil was not empty, according to the word of Yahweh, as he spoke by the hand of Elijah."* You can imagine how that went from day to day....after a while. It's not that a van pulled up to the house, you know, and delivered 25 pound bags of flour and a whole bunch of liters of oil. No, this is just every day she went into that little kitchen nook and there was just enough flour in that jar, and enough oil in that jug to make pancakes for that day. It was like Israel in the wilderness in Exodus 16, with the **manna**: morning by morning, they gathered it. And you can imagine that about day 22 or so of this that maybe this woman danced across at the little kitchen nook, beginning to hum "Great is Thy Faithfulness'. **She began to expect it. Yahweh was proving faithful in sustaining her, and her son, and this prophet through those days. That was the benefit.**

([27:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=jaspLopxNHN0kG7ENIWlLEwIK7sZAryyanv1zIY2blxRSPr-Uo5WuEznQ8AUtCkiXvg9q1PW6cld0GAl5f3wLDT18hI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1624.17)): ***The Fourth Movement: The Reversal of the Benefit***

**But then you notice the reversal that takes place in verses 17 and 18**. A kind of an ominous sounding phrase in 17a, *"Now it came about after these things,"....* Everything seems to fall apart here. **Sometimes, you know, there's a point where things seem to fall apart, and you can point to it.** For instance, in the 1960 World Series between the New York Yankees and Pittsburgh Pirates, they were in the seventh game. They each had won three games; and they're in the seventh game, and it's the last of the eight thinning in Pittsburgh. And the Yankees are ahead seven to four. All they have to do is get six more outs, and they're world champions. Well, Pittsburgh has a man on first; and then the batter, Bill Verdon, hits a ground ball to shortstop, out where Tony Kubek is playing. It's a sure double play ball. Then, they'll just have to get four outs. There comes that ball. It's a double play....And then, all of a sudden, before the ball... just as it gets to Tony Kubek....he's ready to field it...the infield had been chewed up a little bit, and there was a dirt clod there. And the ball hit that dirt clod and careened up into Kubek's throat, and he went down. He could hardly breathe. They had to tend

to him for some time. Well... the runner was safe at first. The runner was safe at second, and so on. As things ended up, Pittsburgh went ahead, and then the Yankees tied it up. And then Bill Mazeroski hit a home run for Pittsburgh in the last of the ninth.... and the pirates won! But the point is, that if everything looks heavenly... winning seven to four. And they go back to that again and again, when they think about that World Series. There was that ground ball hit; and it hit that clod of dirt and slammed into Kubek's throat. And everything went downhill after that. It was like...it's just kind of a **hinge**.

Well, that's the way it is here. You have this desperation, and the promise, and then the benefit from that promise and the enjoyment of it. **And then after these things, the woman's son becomes ill. So ill, there's no breath left and he dies**. She says to Elijah, *"You've come to me to make known my iniquity and to put my son to death."* So in verses 17 and 18, everything seems to go to pot, doesn't it?

([29:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=tH6DhZVXe1Jg63k5w0hD3YcOhyuB2MdABZYloJ2stqbkztOLnZiT4s-_3wbQhbZiWJK4HAVn8Tx4XJp47PJS7bUp4r4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1791.88)):

So you have marvelous **provision** in verses 15 and 16, and then **staggering devastation** in verses 17 and 18. **It's the strange twist of God's ways**. Why does God work that way sometimes? You notice this is not (we've dealt with this passage here before, I know)....but, you know, this is not a new belief. I mean, this is not a mature believer that Yahweh's dealing with here. This is a woman that has just escaped from Baal worship. She's just begun trusting Yahweh. And rather than give her time to mature in her faith, and develop, and get some stability, **He throws this trial at her right away**...at a new convert! What is God doing?

([30:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=TYfkEpdZ4-x58NS9kbCmJwD9jZXXx_Icudbc7-e870anfzu_MNUQJvMc5vbcr-377U3cFtpaoXV0dLHM1g16_ZTzk34&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1846.46)):

**And so she goes from the heights of God's goodness, in verses 15 and 16; through the pit of God's mysteries in verses 17 and 18.** On the one hand, she could say in 15 and 16, "God is so good!" And then she has to say, "God is so terrifying!" Is that what God does? Does he do and give good gifts to his people just so He can lift them up and slam them down all the harder on the concrete? The sequence is disturbing, isn't it? **I think ultimately it's helpful for us to see these strange twists of God's ways in the text of scripture, because you can carry it over into your own experience. And you can say, "Well, this isn't preferable---this kind of stuff---but it's not that abnormal.”** The Lord's people...and that's the value of reading the scriptures...the Lord's people go through this kind of thing again and again. It's not, as I say, something we prefer; but it's not abnormal! There's immense comfort in one way, simply in the recognition that this is not some weird, unheard of affair. Well, sometimes you can be enjoying the goodness of God; and you go from the **sunshine of God's goodness**, into the **muck of God's mystery**. And it helps sometimes to know that the Lord's people have always faced that kind of thing. The strange twists of God's ways.

(32:36): ***Evil Days: 4) Glad News of God’s Victory!***

**Now, fourthly, let's notice here in verses 19 to 24, the glad news of God's victory...the glad news of God's victory.** Now the Lord through an answer to Elijah's prayer in verses 19 to 24, restores this child to life. Now I'm not going to go into all the details of that. But it was pretty important that this happened; because, you see, in Yahweh's promise in verse 14, it was really a promise to sustain her and her household---to sustain the life of her and her son in the face of the famine, and so on. And if he takes the life, or allows the son to die (however you want to put it)...if he lets that happen, it seems as if Yahweh is being unfaithful and unreliable to that promise.

([33:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=3jGhHo5OLi6EOrwijchlFm9wHSrET35zhzYa9Ov2qRF39TIX1HbW0r_NIz16ysbbOIVRsVHVTL8TODspeiAichzilOs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2012.69)):

If he gives a promise, this seems to indicate that he will sustain life; and then he doesn't do it. There's a disconnect there. The woman is thinking that Yahweh's not consistent. He's capricious like the pagan god. That's why it's important at the end of this, that she said, *"Now, I know that you're a man of God. And the word of Yahweh in your mouth is reliable.”* **Yahweh needed to do something here to show that he was *consistent*.** But the point is, as you read of this child's death, is Yahweh like Baal, helpless in the face of death? There was some, I know, we have to be careful. We don't have all the details worked out of the mythology of Baal, and so on... and Baal worship. But there seems to be the idea in paganism that in the Baal epic, periodically Baal had to submit to Mot the god of death, and die, go into Mott's realm and then be brought back to life in some way.

([34:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=oMdM15RSEeLlB5u9-xf3OEBosUwA91C1tsEMKQ5ztWM3ltrMsdtre_82zEC2cRiN7Ect4kXCFCnI3_IdxIktQUV5vms&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2088.08)):

But, Baal was a god who was under the power of death...at least part of the time. Is Yahweh like that? Is he stymied by death? Well, the answer here is “No!” No, he has power over death; and he shows this by raising and bringing back this lad to life. What's that meant to show? Well, it's meant to show Israel at this time, and in Elijah's own time, and in the time when the book was written---of Kings was written---**It was meant to show that Yahweh is the God who has power even over *death*.** **And that when His people enter death, they are not beyond the reach of his power.** Now this is just a sample. This is just a 'for instance'. It's just an example of it. It is not like Elijah then went out and asked Yahweh to raise to life all the dead believers in Israel. He didn't do that; nor did Jesus, did He?. He raises Jairus's daughter, and restores her to life in Mark chapter five. That was just a sample of the fact that Jesus had power, even over the realm of death. And now, when his people are in death's realm, they aren't beyond the sound of his voice or the or the scope of his power. **But Jesus, at that time, didn't go around Galilee raising all the dead believers, did he? It's not time yet. That comes at Jesus second coming. It was just a *sample*.** It was just a **'for instance'**, it was just a **foretaste.** And that's what you have here in one Kings 17, in the restoring of this lad to life again. **It shows Israel that Yahweh is the God who has power, even over death**. And if you enter death's realm, you are not beyond the reach of his power, but it's just a sample, It's just a 'for instance', it's not like...we've just come through Easter, haven't we? It's not like the overt testimony that you have in Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24 and John 20 and first Corinthians 15, and first Thessalonians four. It's not that full or kind of doctrinal teaching about the resurrection of Jesus and the resurrection of believers, is it? No, it's just a kind of a **hint**. It's kind of a **pointer**. It's kind of a **foretaste**. Now you may say, **"Aha, Davis, if that's the case, why should we pay attention to it? We've got all this more explicit teaching. Why should we be paying attention to just a sample.... a point...a preview?"** Well, let me put it this way, if you'd bear with me. **Sometimes a mere *pointer*, or *foretaste*, or *preview* packs more of a punch than a more blatant, overt testament.**

([37:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=kxLVZO9ccc3lQcjGJcWINwbvHBJlbBL1_8KIqR__8d33n0m7E5iL8p-hAl1kvLzRsGuSKKsbfioKtUnYeNhB1rXIbvg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2272.77)):

And maybe we've gone through this before. I'm not sure if we've done this with you or not, but let's imagine, for example, that we have a Christian college ministry and they've had their large group meeting on a particular evening on campus. And some of them stayed behind to discuss stuff with the campus minister; and these few that stayed behind are now leaving. And let's assume that one of them is a very attractive sophomore coed. And here's one of the fellows in the group that's there. And he knows, apparently, that she has to walk all the way across campus to her dormitory. And it's gotten a little bit late...it's almost 10 o'clock. And so he offers, "Would you, would you like me to walk with you back to your dorm so you don't have to go all that way by yourself?"

([38:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=z74vn-xJHYTQxSl33qsIpTyCfRar4AMX7A0RRllb24QDOkBRzqp-8sp-osLh3eNLcBmO2-NFWAPtzLAGUpK_TavrzAM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2330.09)):

Not that it's necessarily an insecure area, but just a nice offer. Now, he does that. And so, they do... and they walk back, and they enjoy the walk; and they talk, and they visit, and they find out more about each other, et cetera, et cetera. And they even stop at the Snack Shack on the way and get a little soft drink, and so on.... keep on going. And, he gets her back to her dorm and says goodnight. And, next day in the campus mail, he gets a note. It says (how shall we write it?)... ***"Dear Tom, I want to thank you for being so considerate in walking me back to my dormitory last night. It was very Gallant (in quotes) of you. And I, so, so (underlined twice)... I so appreciated our getting to talk together and find out more about each other and our plans. I hope that we'll be able to continue that conversation soon. Um, and, and, uh, and so on. And, I know (she goes on to say something like)... I know you have better things to do than just read thank you notes, but I wanted you to know how grateful I am. Warmly, Brenda."***

([40:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-hvx8UNUmCYE5cqVEAARLY6Mxw09a3U_ETma8l-h7q3hvNszag24afRCCWLTOXiR0k2bu594Y7ru27xGdwg5_XXvxO4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2432.53)):

Now, that's nothing big. That's not a proposal of marriage, is it? I mean, that's nothing big. That doesn't hit you between the eyes, does it? But you know what Tom's going to do with that note. He goes into his Medieval European history class the next day, and he opens up the text book. And while the professor is lecturing, he opens up Brenda's note, and he looks at it. And you know, he looks down at that little adverb at the bottom: ***"Warmly."*** Well, she could have said, "Your friend." That would have left you cold. She couldn't say, "Love," because that would be a come-on, or that would be too strong. But...she says, ***"Warmly."*** And he closes his eyes just for a couple of seconds to let that adverb wash over his mind, and so on.

([41:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=9T2YxWnLg5NEj_Oh4OUdUbEtdx-bbfPaZHPvxINbAUpP27uVPhRWb4OzZStDV474bFro-NVX9Zh2swjlTzZiEf5CYmE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2492.15)):

Well then Tom, the next morning---early in the morning---there he is in his room at his desk. And just before he goes off to breakfast, and class, and so on....and let's say he's having his devotions. And he reads his passage in the Bible and thinks a bit about it. And then he prays and he commits his day, and so on; and his concerns to the Lord, and so on. Then, he reaches inside the front cover of his Bible and he pulls out Brenda's note. And he looks at that and he says, "***'So'*** is underlined twice!... ***'I so appreciate it; and I know you have better things to do than read thank you notes.'*** …Well, as a matter of fact, that's all I've been doing the last couple of days, thank you." But he doesn't tell her that, and so on. Well, she says, ***"'I hope we can continue this conversation soon.'*** That means that if I would ask her to Benny and Fergie's Sub Shop for a little supper some night, or something, she'd probably say, 'Yes.'" You see, you just thrive on this. It just fuels you. It just stirs you. **You just think about it; but it's all *subtle***. It's all just a ***point***. Or it's all just ***hints***, and so on. There's nothing overt about it, but it has such power, doesn't it? And you really prefer it. There's nothing is there.

I said, there are some of us that really rather prefer these little incidents like this, that are just ***previews*** of what Yahweh does for his people in the face of death...that are just ***foretastes***. Because we know the assurance; and we thrive on them. They have a great deal of power, though they're just a hint. So they lead us to Jesus in Revelation, chapter one, when he says to us, *"Don't be afraid. I am the first and the last. I am the living one; I became dead, and see...I'm living unto the ages of the ages. And I have the keys to Death and Hades."* That's where that points you. **It's a powerful hint, *the glad sign of God's victory*, that even in death Jesus's people are still pressed in his hand.**

([44:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=W6JBGVIRz8dRkH5YKrzQ1Hj5ynhtBD-YkyuXst2q5Us4da1w6HfrQe457XzhIHVQXuI1rsQGzGnoHQjHx2FOPHs5k9c&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2666.39)):

**Well, the days are evil---more evil than ever before. But according to one Kings 17, God is there defending his cause, judging his people, leading his servants through heart wrenching troubles, and giving them assurance that they are His---even in the face of death.** Antichrist may seem to have come ahead of time, but you press on for God. He's there by the Spirit.

 Let's pray. *“If I ascend to heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in Sheol, why, you were there. If I take the wings of the morning, and go to the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand will lead me.* ***So we can also say, our God, ‘When the days are evil you are there.’ And so we press on, because there is no situation in which you will not be our defender****. And we thank you in Jesus name. Amen.”*