

**How to Thrive When Under Attack from False Friends in the Church****Wednesday, June 15, 2022 ▫ Read 1Kings 16:29–17:24**

*Questions from the Scripture text: When did who become king over whom, for how long (v29)? What is God's assessment of him (v30)? How badly? What seemed small to him (v31)? What did he do in marriage to exacerbate it? With what further result in worship? What did he set up, in what, where (v32)? What else did he make (v33)? What assessment is repeated now (cf. v30)? What did he build (v34)? At what costs? Why should he have known better (cf. Josh 6:26)? Who from among whom now speaks (17:1)? To whom? In whose behalf? What will not happen? Except at what? Now whom does the word of the LORD address (v2)? Where does He tell him to go (v3)? And do what there? How will he be sustained there (v4)? What was the response (v5)? With what results (v5–6)? But then what happened (v7)? How does a solution come (v8)? Where must he go now (v9)? With what provision? Where does he go (v10)? Whom does he find there, where, ding what? What does he ask her? What request does he add in v11? Why is this a difficulty (v12)? For what was she going to use this flour and oil? What does Elijah tell her not to do (v13)? What does he tell her to do first? And then what? How does v14 introduce? What matter was so significant that it received such an introduction? According to what does the widow act (v15)? With what result for them? By what mechanism (v16)? Who else acted according to the Word of the LORD? What new problem arose in v17? How severe was it? How does the widow address Elijah now (v18)? In what action, and in what manner, does Elijah respond in v19? And then what does he do, and in what manner, in v20? Whom does he acknowledge is working this? What does he do in v21? How many times? What does he say? What does the LORD do first in v22? Then what happens? Now what does Elijah do with the child (v23)? What does he say? What does the woman say that she knows now about him (v24)? What does she now know about the Word of the LORD? Where does she find this Word?*

**What is the great power in the world?** 1Kings 16:29–17:24 looks forward to the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these thirty verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that God operates in such a way as to convince us that His Word rules and overrules all things, great and small, with power and mercy.

A new dynasty has begun. Omri was already powerful (cf. v27), and now Ahab marries into the royal family of Sidon (v31). We already know that he will reign twenty-two years (v29). Surely, this is the story of a great power!

Yes, but not Ahab. What good is a reign without rain? The LORD God of Israel puts His Word in the mouth of a prophet, by which the seemingly insignificant man can control whether the heavens bless the earth with rain. The Word of the LORD stops up the heavens.

But the Word of the LORD also feeds His prophet. "The Word of the LORD came to him" in v2, giving Elijah instruction for where to go (v3) and from where to expect rations (v4). So the prophet "went and did according to the Word of the LORD" (v5).

When the brook dries up (v7), help again comes from the Word of the LORD. "The Word of the LORD came to him" in v8. It seems counter-intuitive to designate a widow as his provider (v9, 10). And it seems even more counter-intuitive when we find out that she literally on her last meal (v12). But, if the LORD can use a raven to feed Elijah, He can certainly use a widow. The prophet emphasizes to the widow that it is the Word of the LORD that is in control: "For thus says the LORD God of Israel" (v14). And the Spirit emphasizes to us, that it was the Word of the LORD that was in control: "according to the Word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah" (v16).

So, there's the miraculous drought. And then there's the miraculous provision. But the best is still to follow: resurrection. Lest we think that it is the man who is powerful, rather than the Word in his mouth, we see Elijah brought to extremity in the last scene of our passage. The widow's son's breath (v17) and soul (v21, 22) leave him, and the widow fears the worst: that she is getting straight justice rather than grace (v18). Elijah responds not with retort or rebuke but compassion and desperate cryings out in prayer (v20, 21). How marvelous—in a chapter on the power of the LORD's Word to men, we read that "the LORD heard the voice of Elijah" (v22). Prayer, indeed, is a wonder—even on the lips of a sinner like we are (cf. James 5:17).

But the point of the resurrection was not that the LORD truly listens, but rather that the LORD truly speaks. The woman summarizes the theme of our passage at the end of v24: "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the Word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth."

Ahab has come to power, but the Spirit immediately points us to the real power that operates in the world: the Word of the LORD!

Who seem to be powerful in this world? What is the real power? By what means may you avail yourself of this power? How else does this speaking God invite you to seek His power?

*Sample prayer: Lord, by the Word of Your power, You created the heavens and the earth. And, by the Word of Your power, You uphold all things. Forgive us for when we are intimidated by wicked rulers like Ahab, or for when we despair over circumstances. Remind us that have not only Your Word, but also Your ear. Give us faith to believe You, and make us faithful in prayer. Sanctify us by Your truth, Your Word is truth, in Jesus's Name, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP29 "You Sons of the Gods" or TPH29A "Now Unto the LORD, You Sons of the Mighty"**

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**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

First Kings 16, verse 29, through 17 verse 24. These are God's word. Worked in the 38th year of Asa, King of Judah. I have son of Armory became king over Israel and they have son of Armory, reigned over Israel in Samaria. 22 years now, Ahab son of Omri did evil in the sight of Yahweh.

More than old who were before him and it came to pass as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jerobone son of Nibact but he took his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethba. Al King of the Cydonians and he went and served bail and worshiped him.

Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Vail, which he had built in Samaria and Ahab made a woman image. Wooden image Ahab did more to provoke Y'all a God of Israel to anger. Then all the kings of Israel who were before him in his days.

He all of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with a bureau is first born, and with his son Seguu, he set up its gates, according to the Word of Yahweh which he had spoken through Joshua. The son of None and Elijah the tissue bite of the inhabitants of Gilead said to Ahab as Yahweh God of Israel lives before

whom I stand, there shall be not be due nor rain these years except at my word.

Then the word of Yahweh came to him saying, get away from here and turn the eastward hide, by the brook carried, which flows into the Jordan, and it will be that you shall drink from the brook. And I have commanded the Ravens to PG there. So he went and did according to the Word of you.

Fergie went and stayed by the brook Kerryth which flows into the Jordan. The Ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook. When it happened after a while that the brook dried up because there have been no rain in the land.

Then the Word of Yahweh came to him saying arise, go to Zarephath which belongs to Sidon and 12 there. Dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you. So here rows and went to Zarephath and when he came to the gate of the city indeed, a widow was there gathering strict gathering sticks and he called to her and said, please bring me a little water in a cup that I may drink and she was going to get it.

He called to her and said please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand. So she said, as you all day your God lives. I do not have bread. Only a handful of flour and a bin and a little oil and a jar and see I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare for myself and my son that we may eat it and die.

And Elijah said to her, do not fear go and do as you have said. But make me a small cake from it first and bring it to me and afterward make some for yourself and your son for thus says Yahweh. All of Israel have been a flower. So not be used up nor.

So the draw jar of oil run dry. Until the day y'all, they sends rain on the earth. So she went away and did according to the word of Elisa Elijah. And she and her household ate for many days. Have been a flower was not used up nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the Word of Yahweh, which he spoke by Logic.

Now, it happened after these things, that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick, and his sickness was so serious, that there was no breath left in him. So she sent to a larger So she said to Elijah Well have I to do with you O men of God.

Have you come to bring my sin to remembrance and to kill my son? And he said to her, give me your son, So if you took him out of her arms and carried him, to the upper room where he was staying and he laid him on his own bed, then he cried out to Yahweh and said oh y'all away my God.

Have you also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge by killing her son. And he stretched himself out on the child. Three times, cried out to Yahwe and said, oh, we all wear my God. I pray let this child soul. Come back to him. Then you always heard the voice of Elijah and the soul of the child came back to.

He revived and Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house and gave him to his mother and the largest sense. See your son lives than the woman said to Elijah. Now, by this, I know that you are a man of God. And that the Word of Yahweh in your mouth is the truth.

The part of the reading of God's inspired and inherent worked And so if you didn't catch it all along the way, the number of references to the Word of Yahweh and the command of Yahweh stronger than nature able to coordinate Ravens for feeding a profit and even the miracle of the flower and the oil, according to the word of Yahweh, the droughts that was maintained by the Word of Yahweh.

The Word of Galway that kept coming to the prophet needed it as much as he also was the one who delivered it and and Elijah lives by listening to the instruction, from of the word. From the same Lord whose word he often spoke. And then the word of Yahweh, which brought the the widow's sin to remembrance.

It's interesting to have a prophet in your house and have him explaining to you that who God is and he hates sin. The reason for this drought and why what gerbones on an EBAT did was so bad. Why Ahab is even worse these, the setting up of the temple and Samaria and so forth?

Oh, and the Word of Yahweh on the song, on the lips of Joshua that we're fulfilled. Remember, at the end of the book of Joshua, but not the end of the book of Joshua when they destroyed Jericho, and he prophesied that, the city should not be rebuilt in that.

He who rebuilt. It would lose. His first two sons and his first son, at the beginning of the project, a second son, at the end of the project. So that a man who thinks that his work is more important than his children will discover that his children were supposed to be his legacy and he will have lost that which should have been his legacy.

Well, he poured himself into his work but of course more than that a prophecy against Rebecca, rebuilding a wicked city that was destroyed for its sin against God. And so all the way through the passage you have over and over again the the history ruling and guiding the nature overruling and controlling, the sin, alerting word of truth.

And it's that last one where the the lady perhaps we don't know what's in her heart but we know what probably would have been in our heart and earth situation hearing about our sins. And and here we are not only been brought to great extremity by Providence, having lost our husband, and then having been brought within a handful of flower of our death, but now by faith every day, preparing first for the prophet, and then for myself and for my child and you feel like you're probably doing pretty good spiritually especially when you hear about this Son of Nebat and and son of Armory and all that.

And yet, the prophet tells you about your sin too. And now her child dies. And she thinks, oh great, we're all sinners. We're all going to die. Hopefully, almost a certainly. The Lord Elijah also told her about the Lord's grace and the Lord being the one who cared for that for them and so on.

But when her child dies, you can hear her say. Well, have I do with you, a man of God, if you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to kill my son. But when the sun is raised from the dead, The conclusion is, I know that you are a man of God, and that the Word of Yahweh in your mouth, is the truth.

The word that tells us about our sin, the word that tells us about God's grace toward our sin, the same word through which all things were created The same word that upholds. All things in the power of God. And so what we're going to have from here especially to the end of second Kings, is the battle between the word of God and the throne, the thrones of men, and the victory of the Word of God That takes place in the northern kingdom.

Especially by the the Word of God confronting and condemning and being vindicated upon the evil kings in the north. And it's gonna take place in the southern kingdom to some extent in a similar way with the evil kings, but also the word and its power to direct and reward those who are faithful.

And the fact that the line of David is maintained by that word, because that word has especially promised the coming of Christ. And every, every southern king, then as we go along, we'll find the main question is, is he the tallest one? And, of course they're not. And by the time we get to the end of this southern kingdom, we rightly have given up.

Probably by the time we got to Solomon, it gave up that any of these meerman could be the promise, the Sun, by the word the promised king and by the word of Yahweh from second, Samuel 7 already. And so this is a passage about the greatness of the power of the Word of Yahweh over against Ahab who was very powerful.

And very wicked. We know that Omri was powerful. Although it doesn't tell us much about him about his power, but in verse a couple of verses before we started in verse 27 of chapter 16 said, another rest of the act of honorary which he did and the might that each road.

So he was very powerful but it doesn't matter. And Ahab was already very powerful and then Ahab pulls move that powerful people sometimes do to try to consolidate power. He marries the Crown Princess of the Cydonians. So the northern kingdom controls land racks through the area, Sidon controls shipping routes through the area.

And he marries the Crown, Princess and her dad's name is Ethbiel. And so you have an idea of where they're going to be religiously. She very strongly identifies herself with veil and he immediately begins to install the ale worship in the northern kingdom. So you have this hybrid between Jeroboans invented, worship of Yahweh and Jezebel's bail worship.

So Ahab is as wicked. As he is powerful, he is as far as earthly in a way of speaking earth in an earthly way of speaking. He is very powerful. There's already a mighty king and he made a genius stroke move and Jezebel. We're gonna find out is a queen.

Who knows? How to get her way Ahab? Despite his power at certain times, she's been treat him as a pathetic loser who doesn't know how to dominate the people. And so if you're reading this from an earthly perspective, you're like oh look how powerful Ahab is and how power and how wicked Ahab is.

But then if you're reading it, as the spirit has presented to it to us, The point is to set that over again, against the all-powerful Word of God, Ahab. Can't make it rain. But his power, he can accumulate it to himself servants but they don't have wings and the resources to find bread and meat every morning and every night and the Ravens feed, the prophet like clockwork.

And of course they have does not have power over deck, which is what the word of Yahweh has power over. He has power to overrule the consequences of our sin. And isn't that the point of the whole Bible that the living God is Word? Has made and upholds. Everything has decided by that word and the fulfillment of it and the word becoming flesh.

And Jesus is obedience and sacrifice and resurrection for us because overruled and overcome the consequences of our sin, by making them to report out on Christ instead of us. This is the great thing that the Word of God has done. And so, you know that if you oppose God Almighty power will destroy you.

But if you are trusting in Jesus, Almighty, power is saving you. And not Ahab, or Jezebel or Satan, or your own sin, will be able, ultimately, to destroy you because you have Christ, this power, his life is a tournament, his resurrection and all of it by the word of God.

Wonderful. Wonderful passage. What a wonderful Bible. What a wonderful God and his salvation, let's pray.

Our father in heaven. We thank you that you given us this portion of your words to hear today that even just now as we sat around this table and worshiped you in the hearing of your word read, we were participating in and attending upon that Almighty and saving word that you set before us in this passage.

Oh Lord. Forgive us for when we are rebellious against you like Ahab or mistrusting of you, like the widow was and we pray that you would make us to be like Elijah to be amazed that you whose word controls everything. Listens to what comes out of our mouth because you have loved us and you have a turned for us and we matter to you.

So we thank you that by your word. You have overcome the consequences of our sin and Christ Jesus. And we pray that you would make us to trust and depend upon you in your word. And to be obedient, then to Treasure your work and to place ourselves gladly, undirect grant, all these things.

By the work of your spirit. We ask in Christ's name, Amen.