

Dr. Ron Armstrong • January 10, 2021
The Story: I Like Baked Bread

1 Kings 17:1 Now Elijah ... said to Ahab, "As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."

18:1 After a long time, in the third year, the word of the Lord came to Elijah: "Go and present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the land." **2** So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab.

17 When he saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?"

18 "I have not made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the Baals.

19 Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

19:1 Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.

2 So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."

3 Elijah was afraid and ran for his life ... **4** He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." **5** Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.

All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." **6** He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.

7 The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you."

A. The prophets brought a message of hope or doom, but it was the hearer who got to choose which.

- 1) This era of prophets had a consistent message: Destroy your idols, return to a vibrant relationship with God, or perish.
- 2) They didn't, and Israel falls circa 722 BC and Judah circa 586 BC.
- 3) God is really gracious about warnings, but he is serious about consequences and judgment.
 - Most consequences result from God just stepping back and letting us have our own way.
 - b. Judgment consists of God's deliberate actions to punish unfaithfulness to him.
- 4) Idol worship can get us too. Today's idols?
 - a. Our stuff.
 - b. Our image.
 - c. Our time.
 - d. Our grand plans.

B. There are worries and real problems. "Ahab and Jezebel" were a real problem.

- 1) We have real problems less often than we think, but sometimes we really do.
- 2) There is a difference between a problem and a worry. Sometimes what we call a problem is really a "potential" problem or worry.
- 3) Here are three clarifying questions/thoughts and practical suggestions:
 - Do I have a problem or a worry? If it's a worry, turn it into a prayer. Prayer can change fear into faith.
 - If it's a real problem, pray for comfort and change. God did that for Elijah.
 - If it's a real problem what should we do? Rest, prepare yourself, and get moving.
- 4) We may whine some, we may complain a lot,

but Christ-followers should not give up hope. God still has baked bread.