



CHAPTER 17

When

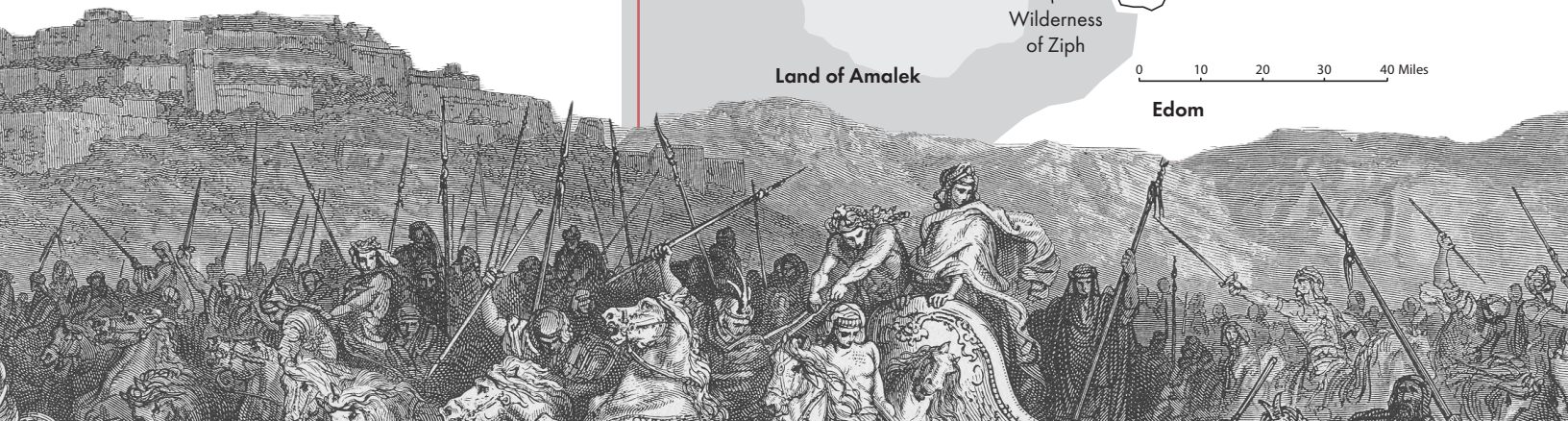
- According to the timeline we are using for this study, the kingdom of Israel and Judah divided in 975 B.C.
- The period that followed, called the period of the “Divided Kingdom,” lasted the next few centuries. Israel remained a cohesive nation until 721 B.C. (Assyrian captivity), while Judah lasted until 607 B.C. (Babylonian exile).
- King Ahab’s reign over Israel (22 years) probably fits somewhere between 920-890 B.C.

Key Characters

- **Elijah** – A prophet of God who announced God’s judgement against Ahab and Israel.
- **Ahab** – Omri’s son and one of Israel’s most wicked kings. He was married to Jezebel.
- **The Widow of Zarephath** – A poor widow who lived with her son. She made food for Elijah, and Elijah raised her son from the dead.

Where

- The kings of Israel lived in Tirzah before Omri built the city of Samaria.
- Elijah was from Gilead.
- Elijah hid from Ahab east of the Jordan River at the Cherith Brook (location unknown).
- After leaving the Cherith Brook, he travelled north to Zarephath. Zarephath was about 13 miles north of Tyre.



Outline

- **ELIJAH PROPHESES A DROUGHT AND IS FED BY THE RAVENS (17:1-6):**
 - + God had a prophet named Elijah who he sent with a message to King Ahab of Israel.
 - + God was going to dry up the land of Israel by preventing it from raining. This was a judgement on the nation for the wickedness.
 - + God told Elijah to go east of Jordan, to the Cherith Brook, and God would provide for him there.
 - + At the brook, God cared for Elijah by causing the ravens to bring him food every morning and evening.
- **THE WIDOW AND HER SON AT ZAREPHATH MAKE BREAD FOR ELIJAH (17:7-16):**
 - + When the Cherith Brook dried up, God told Elijah to go to Zarephath, where he would meet a widow who would take care of him.
 - + When he arrived at Zarephath's gate, he found a widow and asked her to bring him some water and some bread.
 - + The woman told him she only had a tiny portion of flour and oil left, and she was planning to cook one last meal for her and her son before they died.
 - + Elijah told her to use the flour to make him bread first. He promised her, if she would do it, her jar of flour would never be empty, and her jug of oil would never run dry.
 - + She did as the prophet instructed, and Elijah's words came true. God filled her jar of flour and jug of oil every day until the rain returned to Israel.
- **ELIJAH RAISES THE WIDOWS SON FROM THE DEAD (17:17-24):**
 - + One day, the widow's son became very sick and died.
 - + Elijah took the boy, carried him to the upper part of the house, and laid him on his bed.
 - + He stretched himself over the body 3 times and called out to God to raise him from the dead.
 - + God acknowledged Elijah's plea and raise the boy.
 - + When his mother saw him alive, she said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is true."

Application

- There was nothing "traditional" about the way God provided for His prophet in this chapter.
- First, He had birds bring His prophet food.
- Then, He sent His prophet to a woman who was too poor to feed herself and proceeded to feed them both using a supernatural jar of never-ending flour.
- When you find yourself in a tight spot and you can't see any traditional way out of your predicament, think back to stories like this one and remember that God works in mysterious ways.
- He has more ways than you can even imagine to get you the things you need.
- Have faith, like the poor widow, who fed Elijah before herself, trusting that God's word would come true.

