
Narrative Lectionary

Year 3 | The Year of Luke

Scripture Readings

November 1, 2020

*The Twenty-Second Sunday
after Pentecost (All Saints Day)*

..... **About the text**

AUDACIOUS! THAT'S THE ONLY word to use for Elijah's actions in confronting the corrupt king, Ahab.

Anyone else whose conscience was pricked by the actions of this scion, who inherited the reins of power and used them for debauchery, would have thought better of speaking up. They would have kept their heads down and prayed, perhaps, for better times.

Elijah was not "anyone else." He was moved to pronounce a curse on Ahab, face to face. He was moved by an inner spirit of prophecy. The next step suggested by God's Spirit was to get out of Dodge, quickly. Which, he did.

The little family in the wilderness, a widow and her son, were suffering because of the curse. Elijah could leave them alone. Or, act audaciously again...



1 Kings 17:1-24

1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word." ² The word of the LORD came to him, saying, ³ "Go from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. ⁴ You shall drink from the wadi, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." ⁵ So he went and did according to the word of the LORD; he went and lived by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. ⁶ The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the wadi. ⁷ But after a while the wadi dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ⁹ "Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you." ¹⁰ So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink." ¹¹ As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." ¹² But she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I

1 And then this happened: Elijah the Tishbite, from among the settlers of Gilead, confronted Ahab: "As surely as GOD lives, the God of Israel before whom I stand in obedient service, the next years are going to see a total drought—not a drop of dew or rain unless I say otherwise."

2 GOD then told Elijah, ³ "Get out of here, and fast. Head east and hide out at the Kerith Ravine on the other side of the Jordan River. ⁴ You can drink fresh water from the brook; I've ordered the ravens to feed you."

5 Elijah obeyed GOD'S orders. He went and camped in the Kerith canyon on the other side of the Jordan. ⁶ And sure enough, ravens brought him his meals, both breakfast and supper, and he drank from the brook.

7 Eventually the brook dried up because of the drought. ⁸ Then GOD spoke to him: ⁹ "Get up and go to Zarephath in Sidon and live there. I've instructed a woman who lives there, a widow, to feed you."

10 So he got up and went to Zarephath. As he came to the entrance of the village he met a woman, a widow, gathering firewood. He asked her, "Please, would you bring me a little water in a jug? I need a drink." ¹¹ As she went to get it, he called out, "And while you're at it, would you bring me something to eat?"

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am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.”¹³ Elijah said to her, “Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son.”¹⁴ For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth.”¹⁵ She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days.¹⁶ The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

¹⁷ After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill; his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him.¹⁸ She then said to Elijah, “What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to cause the death of my son!”¹⁹ But he said to her, “Give me your son.” He took him from her bosom, carried him up into the upper chamber where he was lodging, and laid him on his own bed.²⁰ He cried out to the LORD, “O LORD my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?”²¹ Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried out to the LORD, “O LORD my God, let this child’s life come into him again.”²² The LORD listened to the

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¹² She said, “I swear, as surely as your GOD lives, I don’t have so much as a biscuit. I have a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a bottle; you found me scratching together just enough firewood to make a last meal for my son and me. After we eat it, we’ll die.”

¹³ Elijah said to her, “Don’t worry about a thing. Go ahead and do what you’ve said. But first make a small biscuit for me and bring it back here. Then go ahead and make a meal from what’s left for you and your son.”¹⁴ This is the word of the GOD of Israel: “The jar of flour will not run out and the bottle of oil will not become empty before GOD sends rain on the land and ends this drought.”

¹⁵ And she went right off and did it, did just as Elijah asked. And it turned out as he said—daily food for her and her family.¹⁶ The jar of meal didn’t run out and the bottle of oil didn’t become empty: GOD’S promise fulfilled to the letter, exactly as Elijah had delivered it!

¹⁷ Later on the woman’s son became sick. The sickness took a turn for the worse—and then he stopped breathing.

¹⁸ The woman said to Elijah, “Why did you ever show up here in the first place—a holy man barging in, exposing my sins, and killing my son?”

¹⁹ Elijah said, “Hand me your son.” He then took him from her bosom, carried him up to the loft where he was staying, and laid him on his bed.²⁰ Then he prayed, “O GOD, my God, why have you brought this terrible thing on this

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voice of Elijah; the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. ²³ Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper chamber into the house, and gave him to his mother; then Elijah said, "See, your son is alive." ²⁴ So the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth."

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widow who has opened her home to me? Why have you killed her son?"

²¹ Three times he stretched himself out full-length on the boy, praying with all his might, "GOD, my God, put breath back into this boy's body!" ²² GOD listened to Elijah's prayer and put breath back into his body—he was alive!

²³ Elijah picked the boy up, carried him downstairs from the loft, and gave him to his mother. "Here's your son," said Elijah, "alive!"

²⁴ The woman said to Elijah, "I see it all now—you are a holy man. When you speak, GOD speaks—a true word!"

Luke 4:24-26

²⁴ And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. ²⁵ But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶ yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon.

²⁴ Well, let me tell you something: No prophet is ever welcomed in his hometown. ²⁵ Isn't it a fact that there were many widows in Israel at the time of Elijah during that three and a half years of drought when famine devastated the land, ²⁶ but the only widow to whom Elijah was sent was in Sarepta in Sidon?

The Narrative Lectionary presents the story of God's work in humanity through a single Gospel each year. This is Year 3: The Year of Luke.