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*"Christ caring for People
through People"*

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1 Kings 16, 17 selected verses (The Message)

²⁹⁻³³ **Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah. Ahab did even more open evil before GOD than anyone yet—a new champion in evil! He went all out, first by marrying Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and then by serving and worshiping the god Baal. He built a temple for Baal in Samaria, and then furnished it with an altar for Baal. He made the GOD of Israel angrier than all the previous kings of Israel put together.**

¹ **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."**

²⁻⁴ **GOD then told Elijah, "Get out of here, and fast. Head east and hide out at the Kerith Ravine on the other side of the Jordan River. You can drink fresh water from the brook; I've ordered the ravens to feed you."** ⁵⁻⁶ **Elijah obeyed GOD's orders. He went and camped in the Kerith canyon on the other side of the Jordan. And sure enough, ravens brought him his meals, both breakfast and supper, and he drank from the brook.**

Elijah fed by ravens. (Matthew Henry's commentary)

"God wonderfully suits men to the work he designs them for. The times were fit for an Elijah; an Elijah was fit for them. The Spirit of the Lord knows how to fit men for the occasions."

For a long time in its early history Israel was ruled not by kings, but by prophets sent by God. Then came a time when they grumbled against God about this and demanded that God give them a king, "like the other countries" by whom they were surrounded. They didn't know how well off they were, but they were soon to learn. A long series of kings ruled over them, taxes and armies were raised, and they suffered greatly. But Ahab was the worst. **"Ahab did even more open evil before GOD than anyone yet—a new champion in evil!"** But God had not abandoned them. As a lesson to them he chose a gentile to stand up to Ahab, not even an Israelite! Elijah, the Tishbite had the courage to speak up to Ahab. But this was dangerous. Immediately God instructed him, **"Get out of here, and fast. Head east and hide out."**

God then provided for Alijah while he was in hiding. What a change in his calling; from standing up to reprimand a king, to hiding out in the solitude of a ravine. God didn't just call him to action, but then to inaction. Matthew Henry recognized a wonderful truth in this part of the story. *"If Providence calls us to solitude and retirement, it becomes us to go: when we cannot be useful, we must be patient; and when we cannot work for God, we must sit still quietly for him."* And regardless of God's call, to action or to retirement, he provides. "There is a river which makes glad the city of God, that never runs dry, a well of water that springs up to eternal life."

Lord, give us that living water!

Amen.

(Rev). John McGurrin