**Gathering of Leaders Bible Study**

**1 Kings 17:8-16**

The word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, “Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.”

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.” As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, “Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” 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 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.” 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. 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.” She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. 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.

**Round 1: Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon**To follow God’s call is to go into hostile territory.

There are no spaces that are “safe” in these conversations. We have to go to Zarephath.

*Question: How do you size up the dimensions of that (internal/external) hostility in your own Zarephath?*

**Round 2: live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.**

Our human impulse is to go into hostile territory with hostility, with heavier armor and bigger weapons.

God tells Elijah, who is something of a cosmic warrior prophet, to go into hostile territory not to blow things up, but to live there. Go vulnerable, because, through a widow, I am going to feed and sustain you.

*Question: What is the armor, O warrior prophets, that you need to strip off when you go to Zarephath?*

**Parting question: What small gifts and what promise do we and our communities carry with the power to transform hostility to hospitality, Zarephath to that place where God made himself wonderfully known?**